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SEVEN WHO SELL STYLE: HERE'S HOW THEY LIVE By Wendy Goodman

MARCH 23, 1998

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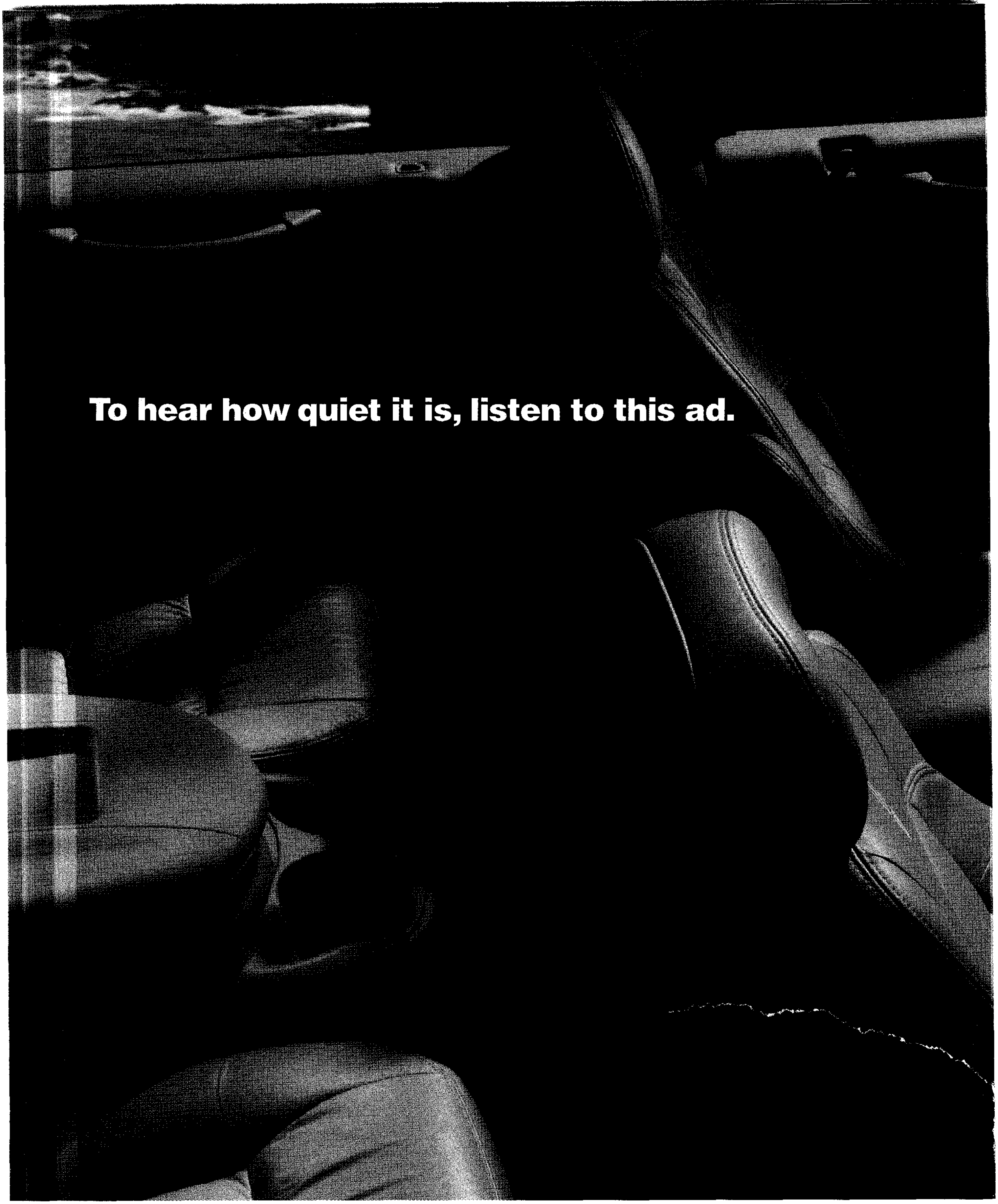
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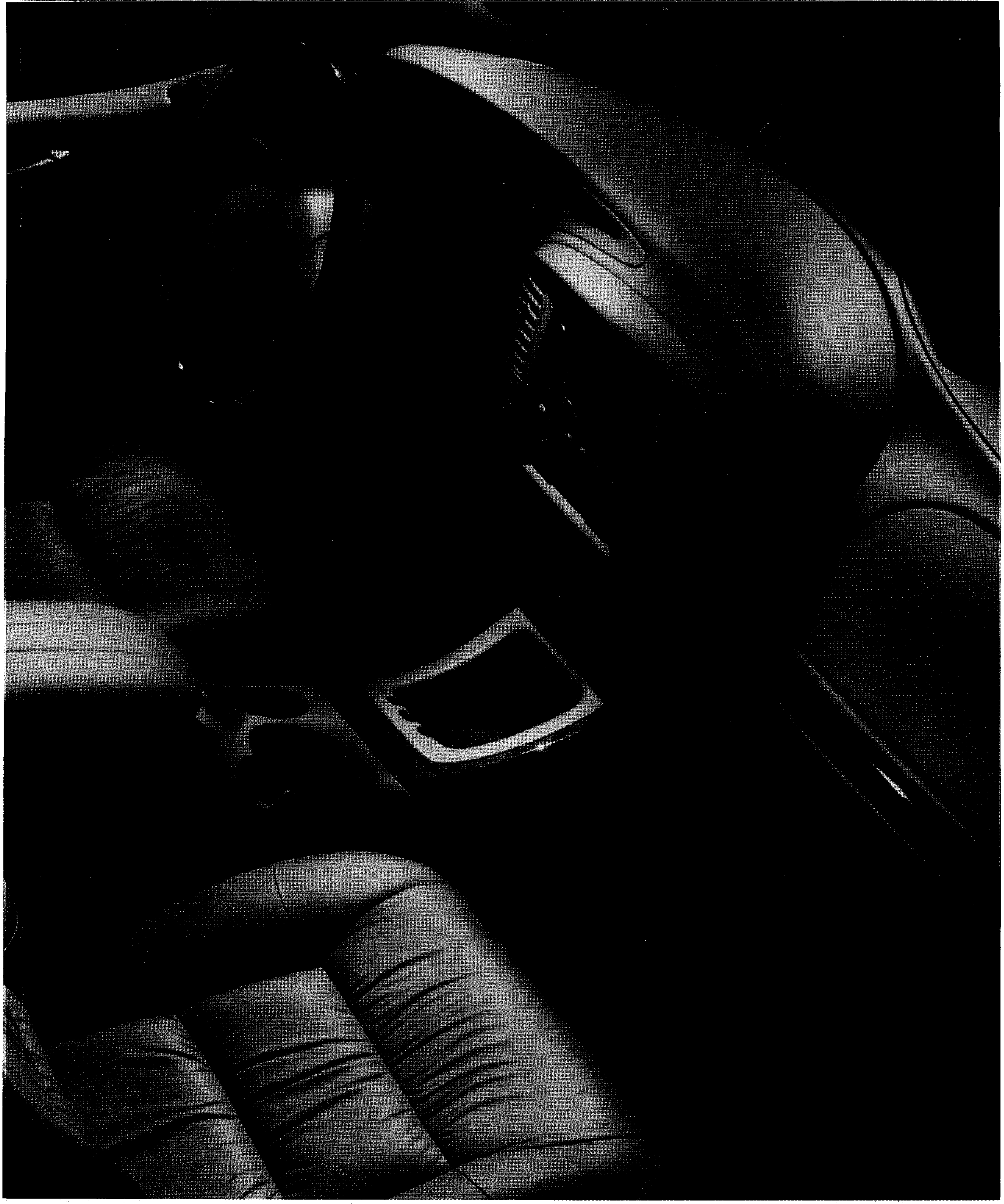

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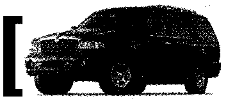
Navigator from Lincoln. What a luxury [ **] should be.**

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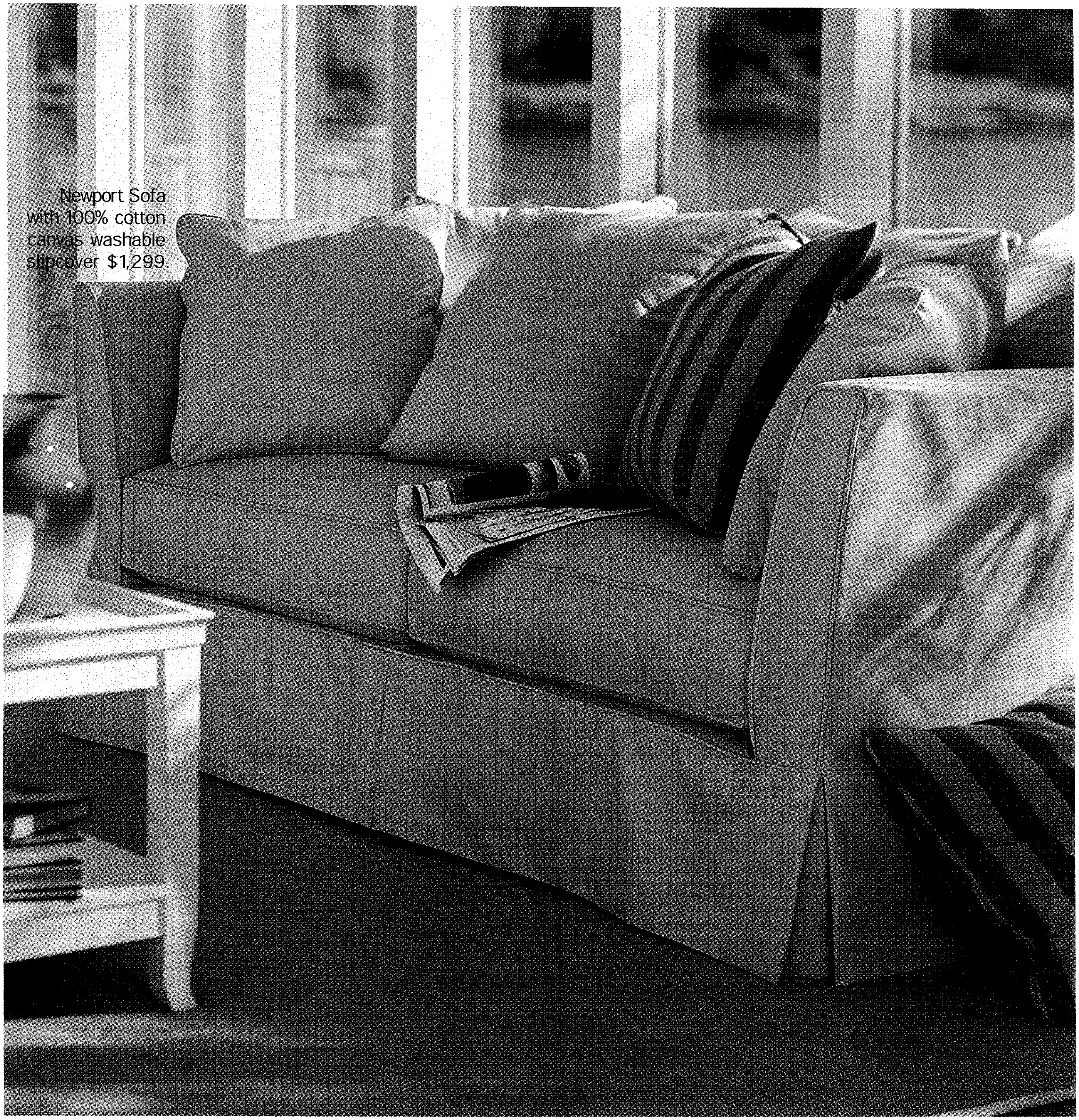

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Crate&Barrel

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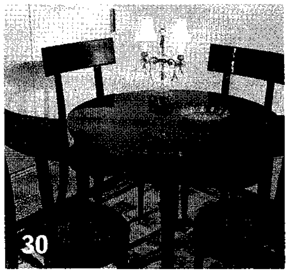

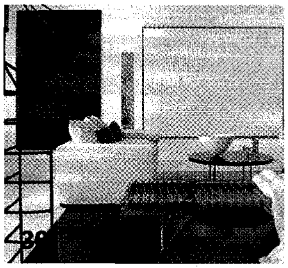

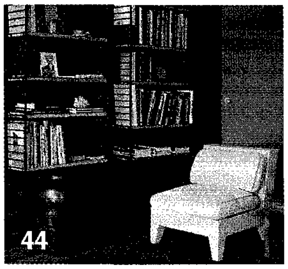

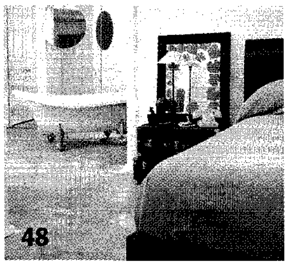

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Cover: Photograph by Fernando Bengoechea.

Photographs: clockwise from top right, Steve Wisbauer; Robert Wright; Antonin Kratochvil/Saba; Philip Greenberg; Fernando Bengoechea; Fernando Bengoechea (2); Andrew Bordwin; Fernando Bengoechea.

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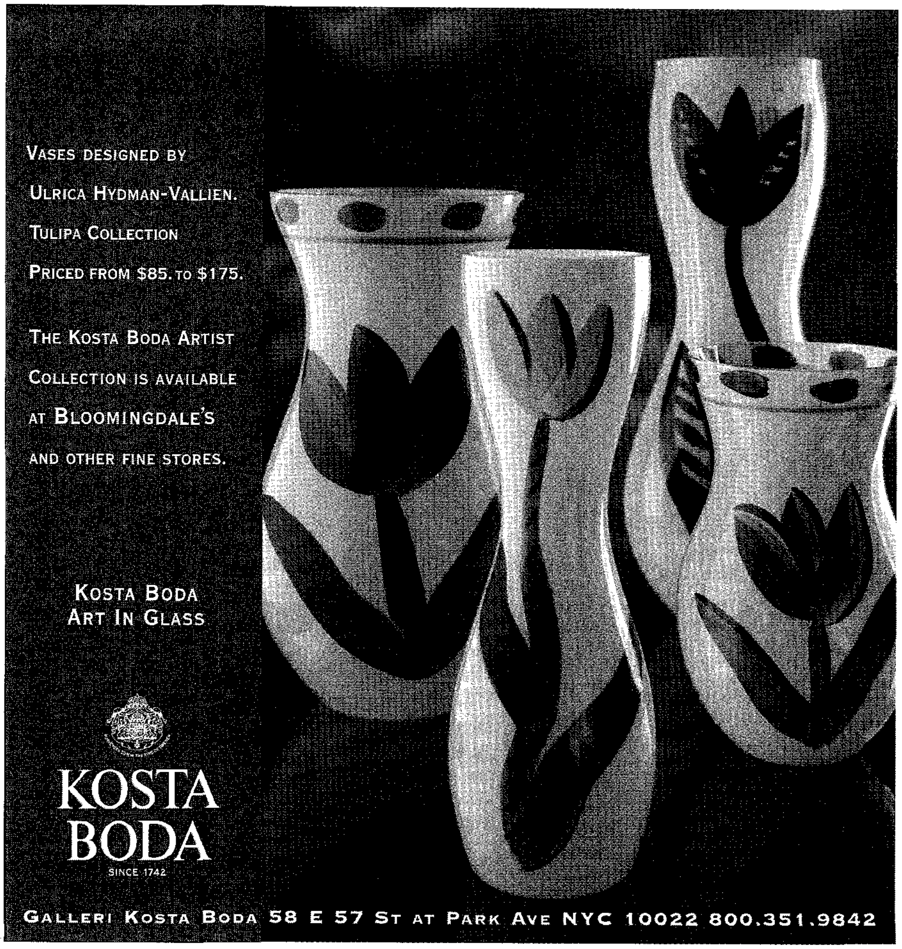

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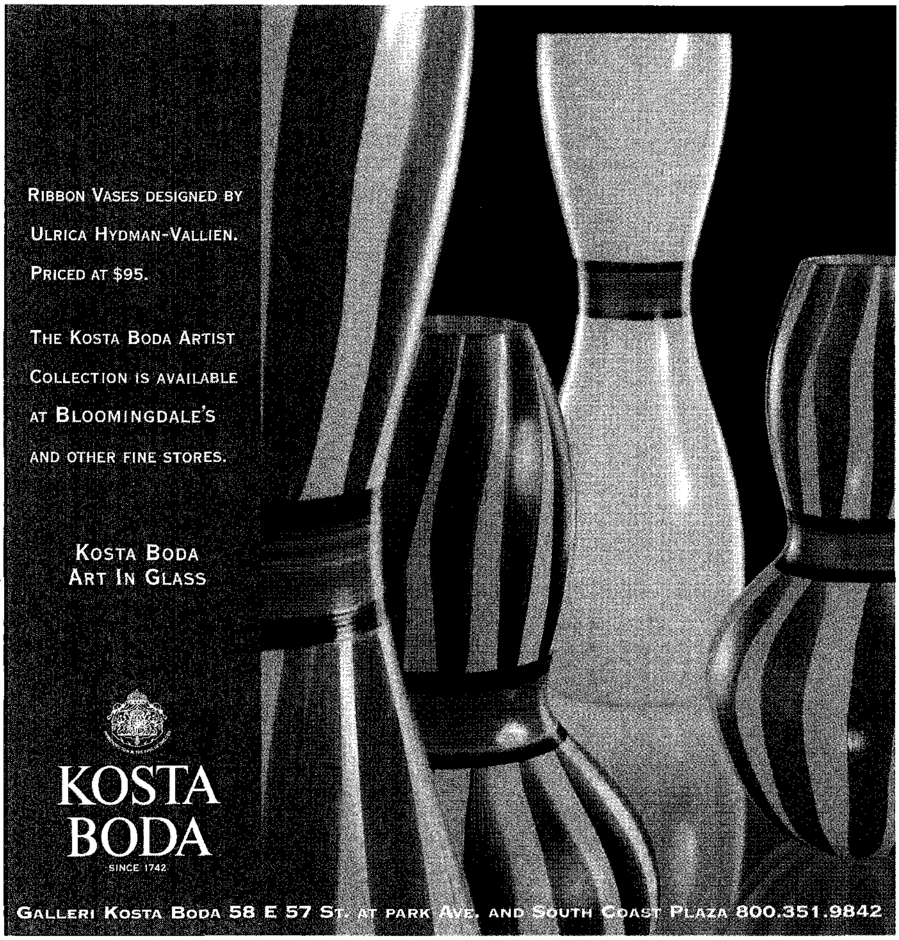

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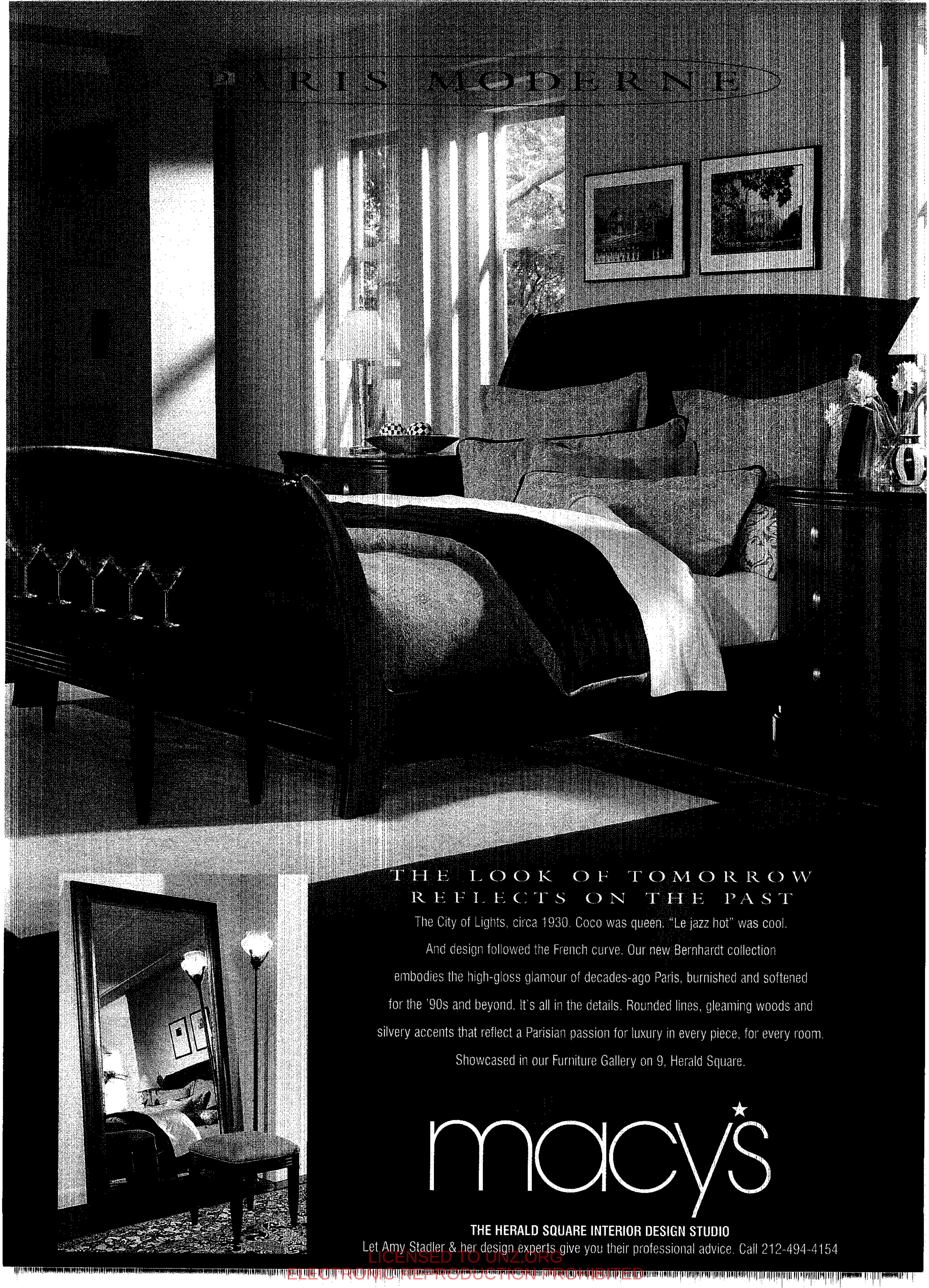

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When in France...

Mike Nichols's defense of infidelity raises some American eyebrows; Matt Drudge's lone defender; does neutering count as a style choice?

FORGET WHETHER MIKE NICHOLS IS A Clinton apologist; the more alarming issue is that he so relishes his role as an apologist for all philandering husbands ["True Colors?," by James Kaplan, March 2]. He dismisses the despair of spouses and children who have felt betrayed as infantile, but who's really the child here? Nichols first hero-worships the great politician into the great man, then sophomorically rationalizes infidelity as the result of a powerful libido. Please. Perhaps Nichols wouldn't be so cavalier about "Daddy cheat[ing] on Mommy" if Diane had a zipper problem.

Susan M. Brown
MANHATTAN

MIKE NICHOLS'S STATEMENT THAT "IN France . . . private acts are private acts. They long ago figured out that men who get a lot accomplished have powerful libidos" is interesting. It seems to me that the entire country of France is in disarray and has been for the past six decades. The powerful men of France don't seem to get much done at all. Look at the problems they have keeping their population from striking. *This* should be a role model for the United States? The United States, with all our flaws, is the measuring stick for the world. Shouldn't we try to raise the standard rather than stoop to the level of those who settle for mediocrity, complacency, or worse?

M. G. Daly
MANHATTAN

Last Laugh

I LOVED THE FEBRUARY 9 COVER, AND I happen to like Bill Clinton. I almost wrote in to praise it, but I can't be bothered writing letters. I'm only doing so now having been spurred on by the negative letters I just read. Ignore them if they have no sense of humor. I kept picking it up and chuckling all week.

M. Donahue
MONTAUK, N.Y.

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SAY, FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT, THE president had sex on the steps of the Capitol at high noon. My attitude would be "Who cares?" ["Zipper Madness," February 9]. We (the American people) elected Bill Clinton to govern the nation. *He is doing that.* Ken Starr, get a life!

Lyn Morris
BROOKLYN

Charmed

IN THE PAST MONTH, I HAVE PERSONALLY been subjected to some of the rudest people working in journalism I have ever met ["Gotham: Cameo," March 9]. Granted, many were courteous and kind, but there were some doozies along the way. One of those who contacted me was Matt Drudge, whom you call the "most ill-mannered man in American journalism." I found him charming, polite, and thoroughly professional. Could your writer's opinion of Drudge be based on the fact that he gets at least a 24-hour drop on the Big Feet?

Lucianne Goldberg
MANHATTAN

Fashion Statements

THAT THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR AT BARNEYS could even say "People are forgetting the Gulag and Stalin and the negative imagery. So it could be time for it to come back as pure style" is indicative of the vapid, uninformed sentiment that paves the way for radical dictators to commit atrocities with impunity ["Gotham: Commie Chic," by Virginia Heffernan, February 23]: People really don't want to think about icky things like genocide or Machiavellian political purging—they just want to look good. What's next? The anniversary edition of *Mein Kampf* and cute little swastika armbands on the sleeves of Helmut Lang's spring collection?

Gretchen Huizinga
BELLEVUE, WASH.

WHY MUST YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THE PERpetuation of the "fuddy-duddy" perception of librarians, which many of us information professionals fight so hard to counteract? Your article on pleated skirts in the February 23 issue ["All You Can Pleat," by Penelope Green] purports that taking this below-the-knee-length fashion risk may make you look like a "lascivious librarian."

Let me say, as a genetically stylin' native New Yorker, that there are plenty of high-fashion librarians out there (both men and women) who wear leopard print, fabulous shoes, and Italian suits. Get into the nineties, will you? God bless Parker Posey for *Party Girl*!

Elizabeth D. Kenney
President
Association of Boston Law Librarians
BOSTON

IN "BETTY KNOWS BEST," BY BOB MORRIS [February 23], the last line of the second column reads ". . . Halbreich guides her to a sheeny suit . . ." Using such a slur is disgusting. That this sentence appears in an article about a mother choosing a suit for her daughter's bas mitzvah is incredibly offensive. Shame on you.

Esther Rosenbloom
CHICAGO

The editor responds: According to *Webster's, sheeny* is an adjective describing "a textile exhibiting notable sheen." We felt that in a description of a piece of clothing, the meaning was perfectly clear and unobjectionable.

CYRUS THE GREAT DANE UNDERWENT COSmetic surgery to crop his ears, but the family jewels were left intact ["Spring Fashion: Pet-a-Porter," February 23]. There is nothing stylish or sexy about unaltered dogs at a time when overpopulation means neglect, abuse, and abandonment for the unlucky, and euthanasia for the lucky. The only fashionable accessory of an intact dog like Cyrus is his shiny red New York City dog license (not visible in the spread). The higher licensing fee for unaltered dogs helps to fund spaying and neutering for pets whose owners are responsible enough to choose it but who otherwise could not afford this necessary procedure.

Jennifer Stevens
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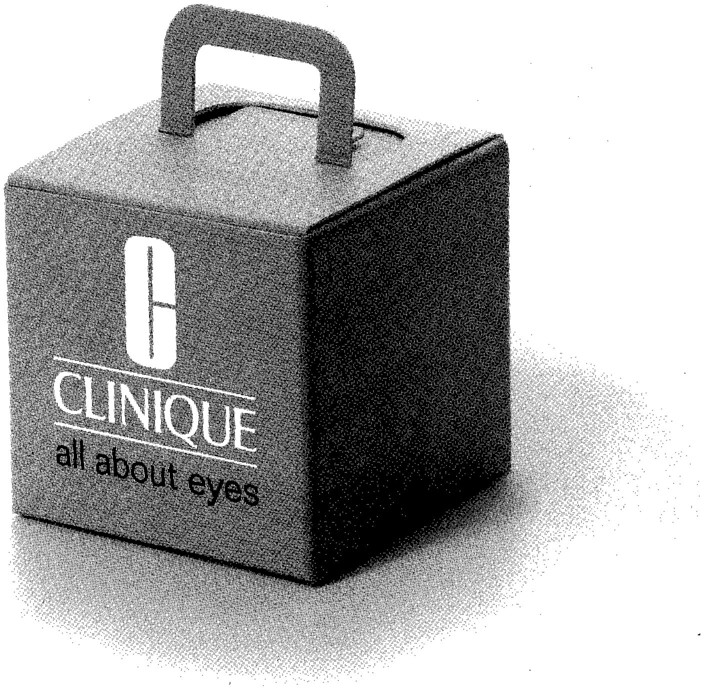

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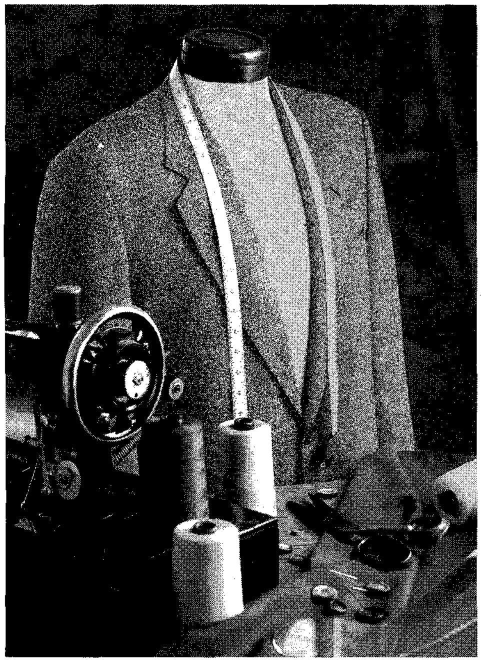

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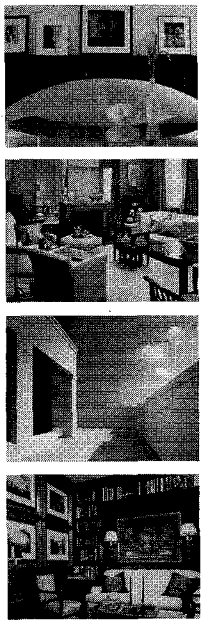

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DESIGNER PREVIEWS

LETTERS

"wrote off huge losses in 1996" ["Can This Man Save Publishing?," March 2]. For the record, Simon & Schuster had its most profitable year ever in 1996. (And we're happy to report an even better performance in 1997.) This success has been built in part on literary fiction and serious nonfiction—*Accordion Crimes,* by E. Annie Proulx; *Angela's Ashes,* by Frank McCourt; *Citizen Soldiers,* by Stephen Ambrose; *Underworld,* by Don Delillo; and *Pillar of Fire,* by Taylor Branch. We deem these serious books to be not an endangered species but, in fact, the lifeblood of our business.

Jack Romanos
President, Simon & Schuster
MANHATTAN

Caveat Emptor

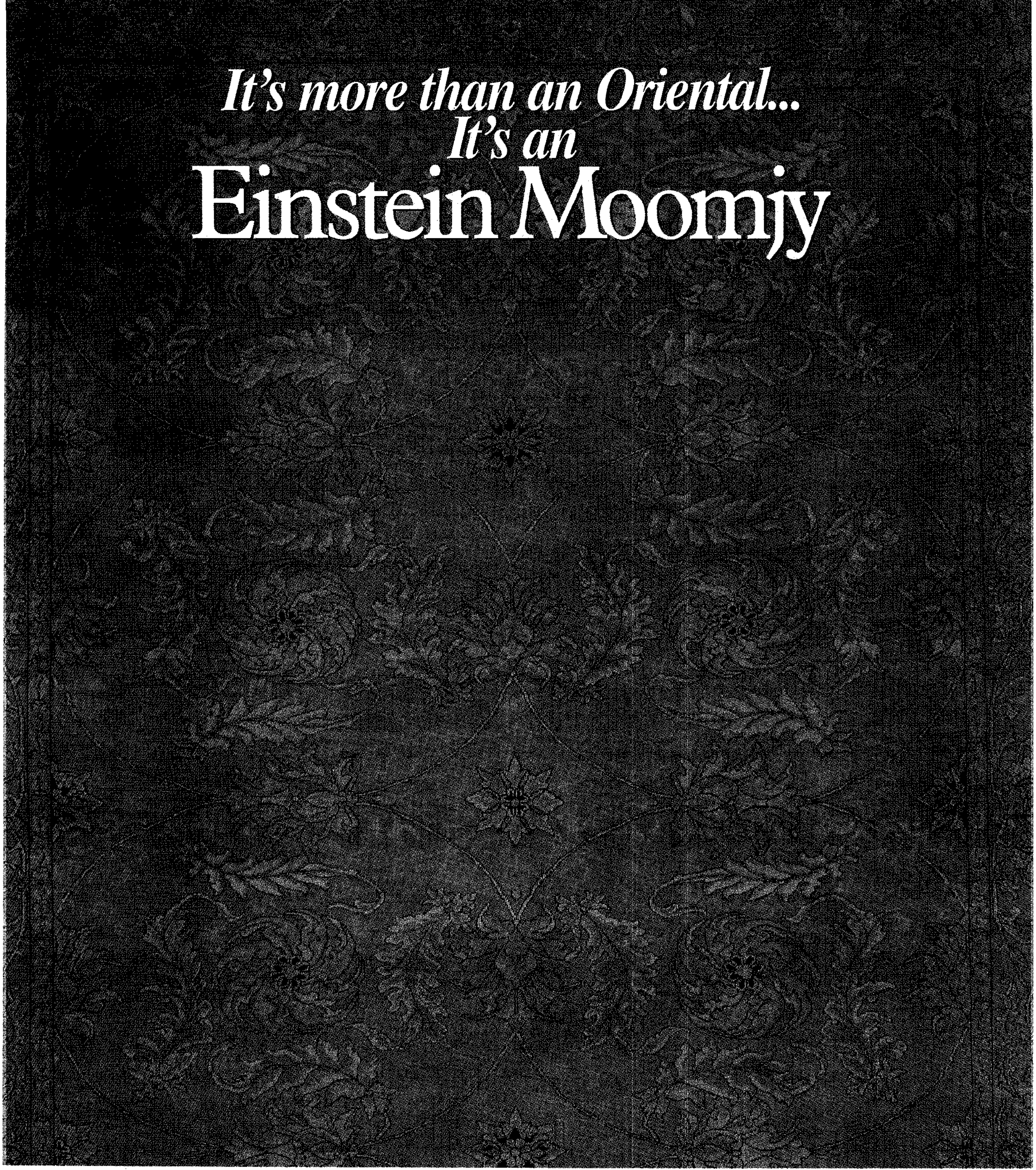
JOHN SIMON'S REVIEW OF PAUL SIMON'S soon-to-be-shuttered musical *The Capeman* has added another hysterical voice to the chorus of critics who have assaulted this extraordinary Broadway offering ["Theater: Troubled Waters," February 16]. What's up, John? Feeling a little thin-skinned because Paul Simon hasn't even tried to hide his disdain for "business as usual" on your turf?

The fact is that Latino superstars Ruben Blades, Marc Anthony, and Ednita Nazario deliver gorgeous renditions of some of the finest music ever composed by Paul Simon, with sets by Bob Crowley that are truly remarkable and a story that is genuinely compelling. How do you reconcile your outlandishly vicious critical attack with the overwhelmingly positive audience reactions—and I mean standing ovations—night after night?

Irwin Redlener
NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y.

WHAT A PLEASURE TO READ A POPULAR-music review featuring three guys who aren't even popular, just talented ["Pop Music: Case Studies," by Billy Altman, March 2]. With all due respect to Hal Rubenstein's article on finding new and interesting Chinese restaurants ["Restaurants: Lo Mein Event"], the task of finding new and interesting popular music can be even more daunting. God knows it's out there, but thanks to the city's wallpaper radio formats, you rarely hear it. I actually went out and bought Peter Case's new record. Altman was right: It's terrific. Now for some lo mein.

Ken Shuldman
MILLBURN, N.J.



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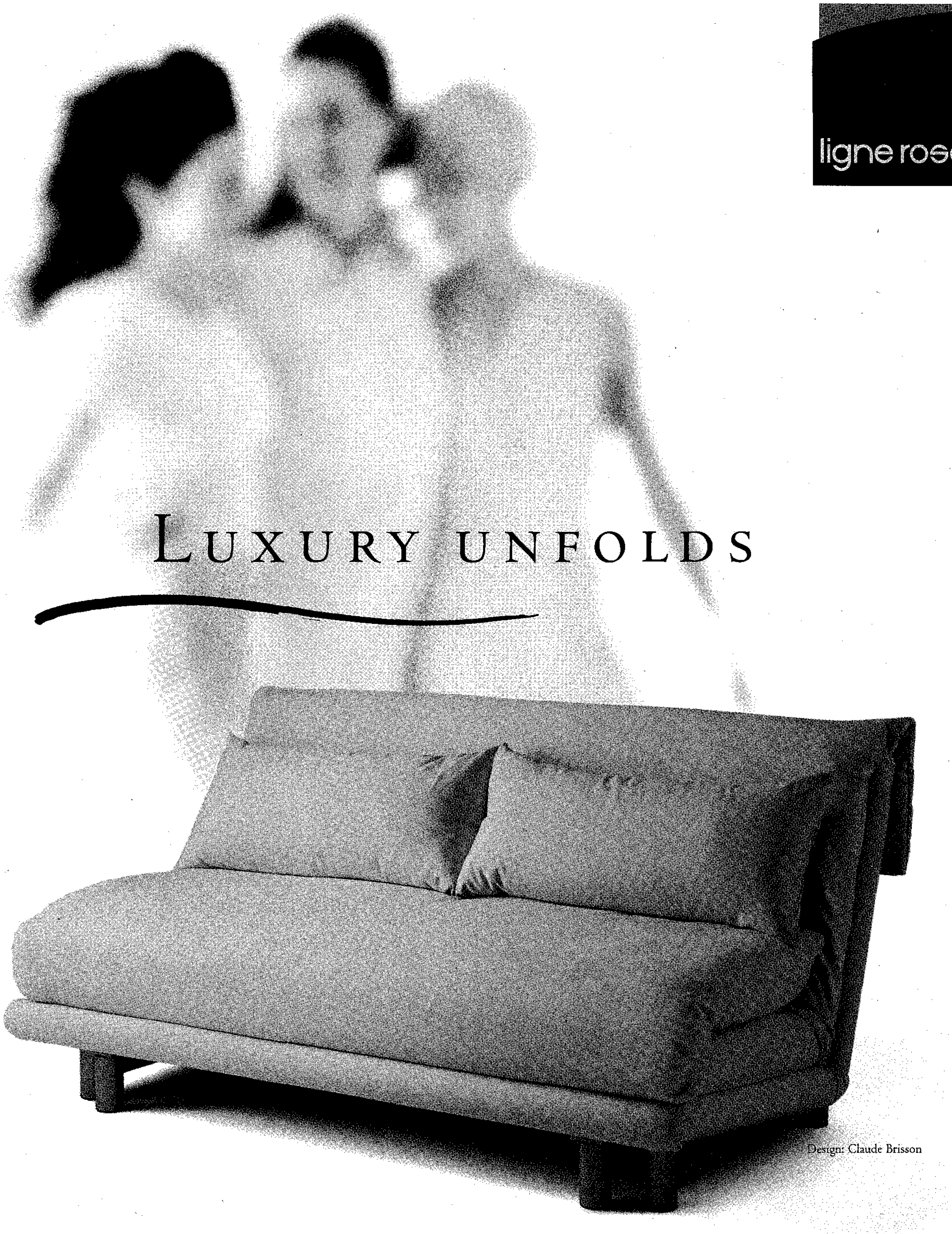

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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

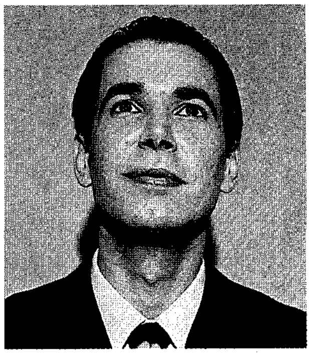
INTELLIGENCER

PAPA ARTIST KOONS GETS CUSTODY

The bitter child-custody battle between sculptor **Jeff Koons** and his ex-wife, the former Italian politician and porn star **Ilona (Cicciolina) Staller,** has always been a somewhat complicated international affair. Koons was granted custody of the couple's son in New York, but Staller had won the legal battle in Italy—until March 4, when an Italian court ruled that she was "too permissive" and ordered 5-year-old **Ludwig Maximilian** back to New York by August 1. "Jeff is ecstatic," says a friend who's been in touch with the artist. But Staller has vowed to appeal the case. "I love my son, I live for him," she wailed on Italian television, calling the most recent decision "cruel." Evidently, Koons also lives for his son: His recent series "Celebration," which has been in production for three years, includes the sculptures *Play-Doh* and *Balloon Dog.* And now more change is underway for Koons, who has just started sketches for a new series of smaller pieces.. "The new work may be a joint project between Deitch and Sonnabend," says **Jeffrey Deitch,** Koons's current agent, who replaced Sonnabend in that role. Now "we're all friendly," explains Deitch.

GODZILLA STOMPS *SMALL SOLDIERS*

Godzilla has a lot of brute strength and no sense of humor—just like Sony Pictures, which is releasing *Godzilla* on May 20. The film's ad campaign ("Size does matter") began last summer with a spot that showed the foot of the monster stomping on a dinosaur skeleton—a not-so-subtle allusion to **Steven Spielberg's** *Jurassic Park.* But when DreamWorks SKG came up with a similar spoof for its upcoming animated action movie *Small Soldiers*—the never-released trailer showed a Godzilla-like creature getting tied up by the film's tiny warriors ("Size doesn't matter," reads the tag line)—Sony fought back, threatening to sue over DreamWorks' use of the licensed lizard, according to an industry insider. The company's last chance to show the trailer—at last week's ShoWest in Las Vegas—was scuttled when that threat came down, says the source. A Sony spokeswoman insists there was no threat. "If there had been no threat, we would have shown it," says a DreamWorks source.



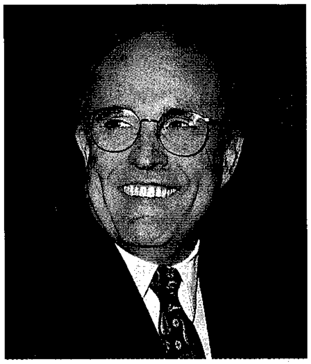
Jeff Koons: Father knows best

FEMINIST TIRADE IN STORE FOR BARNEYS

Susan Powter wants Barneys New York to stop the insanity. The crew-cut fitness guru turned feminist is fighting mad over *Us Girls,* the clothier's new catalogue featuring several typically gaunt, gorgeous models. Powter's problem is not with the photos but with the captions, which read, "Us girls invent statistics to win arguments," and "Us girls heard a good joke but can't remember it." "I will *never* shop there again," Powter puffed on her national radio show. "I've walked in that store and spent $30,000 on clothing, but I'm not one of *your* girls." She calls the booklet typical sexist pandering. "Why not say, 'Us Boys'? 'Us boys like to jack off. Us boys don't like to take responsibility.' You're either for feminism or against it . . . if you're against it, you're an idiot. . . . Apparently, Barneys's advertising campaign is run by idiots." (Grammarians are reported to be equally offended.) But the company's executive vice-president, **Simon Doonan,** calls the two-week-old mailing a celebration of women, not a degradation. "We've had such a positive reaction from all our customers," he says, although Barneys did field calls from Powter followers after she blasted the catalogue on air. "They were not angry phone calls," says a store insider. "They just wanted an explanation."

RUDY'S NEW STREET-SWEEPING PLAN

All those hoping to preach to the masses in Times Square had better pack up their soapboxes. According to one City Hall insider, the latest stage in mayor **Rudy Giuliani's** quality-of-life campaign is an attack on speechifiers congregating on the traffic island in front of the Army's recruitment headquarters on 43rd Street. The area has long been a magnet for religious fanatics, social-rights activists, and assorted characters. "Just because the mayor doesn't want to hear something doesn't mean he has the authority to ban it," says **Norman Siegel,** executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, who has sponsored two death-penalty protests on 43rd Street. "This is antithetical to the concept of free speech; we demonstration organizers will sue if we must." A spokesperson for Giuliani did not return calls.



Rudy Giuliani: No man on an island

DONNA'S NEW STORE; HOTELS GALORE

MORE IN STORE: It looks as if the new DKNY flagship store on Madison Avenue will offer more than cloth-

Photographs: clockwise from top right, Dana Lixenberg/Outline; Evan Agostini/Gamma Liaison; Lisa Rose/Globe Photos.

Donna Karan:
In-spa-ration

ABE: LAUGH, AND YOU LAUGH ALONE

A message from comedy-club owners to **Abe Hirschfeld:** Don't quit your day job. The novelty of a Hirschfeld appearance was enough to secure the mayoral hopeful a chance to perform at various comedy clubs around town last week, but many proprietors aren't welcoming the repeat performances he's offered. "He's got this pushy and aggressive entourage, telling me my club won't survive without Abe," says **Randy Credico,** an emcee at the Monkey's Paw. "I'm afraid if I don't let Abe go on, he'll buy the building and fire my ass." Others are taking a more defiant stance. "He is godawful. We would never have him back," says a representative for a major club. "We would shut down first." But Hirschfeld points out that he has had several more bookings lately, at the Gotham Comedy Club, the Gershwin, and the Monkey's Paw, and he claims that even **David Letterman** has come calling. Says Hirschfeld: "When I am appearing, the place is completely full and sold out. When I leave, it empties out again." Now Credico is wondering, "Who's next: Mort Zuckerman?"

Al D'Amato:
Dry run

ing. Word is that **Donna Karan** is considering such options as a juice bar, a small restaurant, and even a modified day spa to go along with the clothing and accessories at the tri-level, 16,700-square-foot space opening across from Calvin Klein, between 60th and 61st Streets. "We've been talking about doing all kinds of things," says Karan spokeswoman **Patti Cohen.** "We're looking at all options, anything that brings in urban energy." The store's opening is set for early 1999.

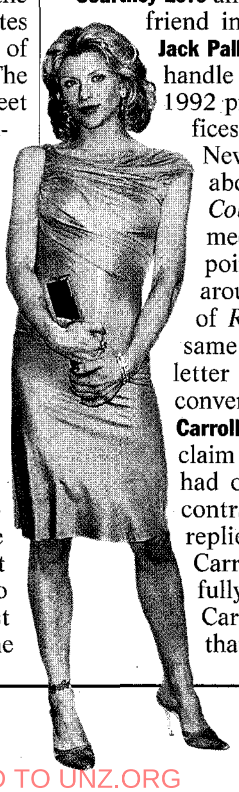
CLEAN SWEEP: Even after securing his coup of a $41.3-billion budget for mass-transit spending last week, Senator **Alfonse D'Amato** didn't go out to toast his victory. D'Amato is so determined to run a clean, conservative campaign that he is abstaining from alcohol during the coming months. "The senator is in full-blown campaign mode. He wants to remain totally focused and committed," explains a Senate insider, who adds that for the time being D'Amato is "skipping wine with dinner and having mineral water instead." A spokesperson for D'Amato declined to comment.

SPACE INVADERS: The boutique hotels may outnumber the big-name hostelries come the new millennium. **Ira Drukier** and **Richard Born,** partners in the Mercer Hotel and the Stanhope, will open a 100-room hotel on 56th Street just west of Fifth Avenue by the summer of 1999. "We are talking to name designers and restaurateurs, and we are planning for a health club," says Drukier. "The idea is to give someone an alternative to the larger hotels in the area like the St. Regis or the Four Seasons. The room rates will be just under those of these larger hotels." . . . The space on West 10th Street that once housed the restaurant Texarkana will again be serving up Tex-Mex fare, along with Gulf Coast and Louisiana cuisine. L-Ray, as it will be known, is the project of **Fernando Saralegui, Charlie Palmer's** partner in Alva. He plans to open his second restaurant, this time on his own, in July . . . **Lauryn Small,** who worked the front of the house at Match until moving to the Independent, will be leaving the trendy TriBeCa restaurant to open her own Latino bistro, Ideya, on West Broadway between Broome and Grand Streets, along with friend Tamar Kuznick.

PLUS ÇA CHANGE: James Reilly, the gay activist who participated in a heated exchange with **Charles Schumer** at a February meeting of the Queens Gay and Lesbian Democrats ("Intelligencer: Schumer Shows His Primary Colors," March 2, 1998), may not have been such an innocent bystander after all. At the time of his encounter with the Queens representative, Reilly was already interviewing for a position as an administrative aide working for public advocate—and Schumer rival—**Mark Green.** Reilly landed the job a few weeks later.

Additional reporting by Kate Coyne, Emily Spilko, and Connell Barrett.

A SECAUCUS SIT-IN FOR COURTNEY'S GUY



Courtney Love and **Bill Clinton** apparently have at least one friend in common. Last Wednesday afternoon, **Jack Palladino**—the gumshoe reportedly hired to handle the "bimbo eruptions" during Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign—arrived at the offices of Carol Publishing Group in Secaucus, New Jersey, demanding to speak to someone about the upcoming book *Who Killed Kurt Cobain?* Publisher **Steven Schragis** refused to meet with Palladino, who didn't have an appointment, although the detective hung around for an hour anyway. "It reminded me of *Roger & Me,"* Schragis says. Later that same afternoon, Palladino faxed Schragis a letter that disputed the book's account of a conversation involving Love's lawyer, **Rosemary Carroll.** Palladino's fax also refuted another claim in the book, namely that the private eye had offered one of the authors a recording contract if he'd drop the project. Schragis replied that the tome had already shipped. Carroll's lawyer, **Stanley Arkin,** says he's "carefully reviewing" the manuscript, adding that Carroll and Palladino "both believe ardently that there is a serious defamation."

Photographs: clockwise from top left, Gregory Pace/Sygma; Stephen Trupp/Globe Photos; Gregory Pace/Sygma.

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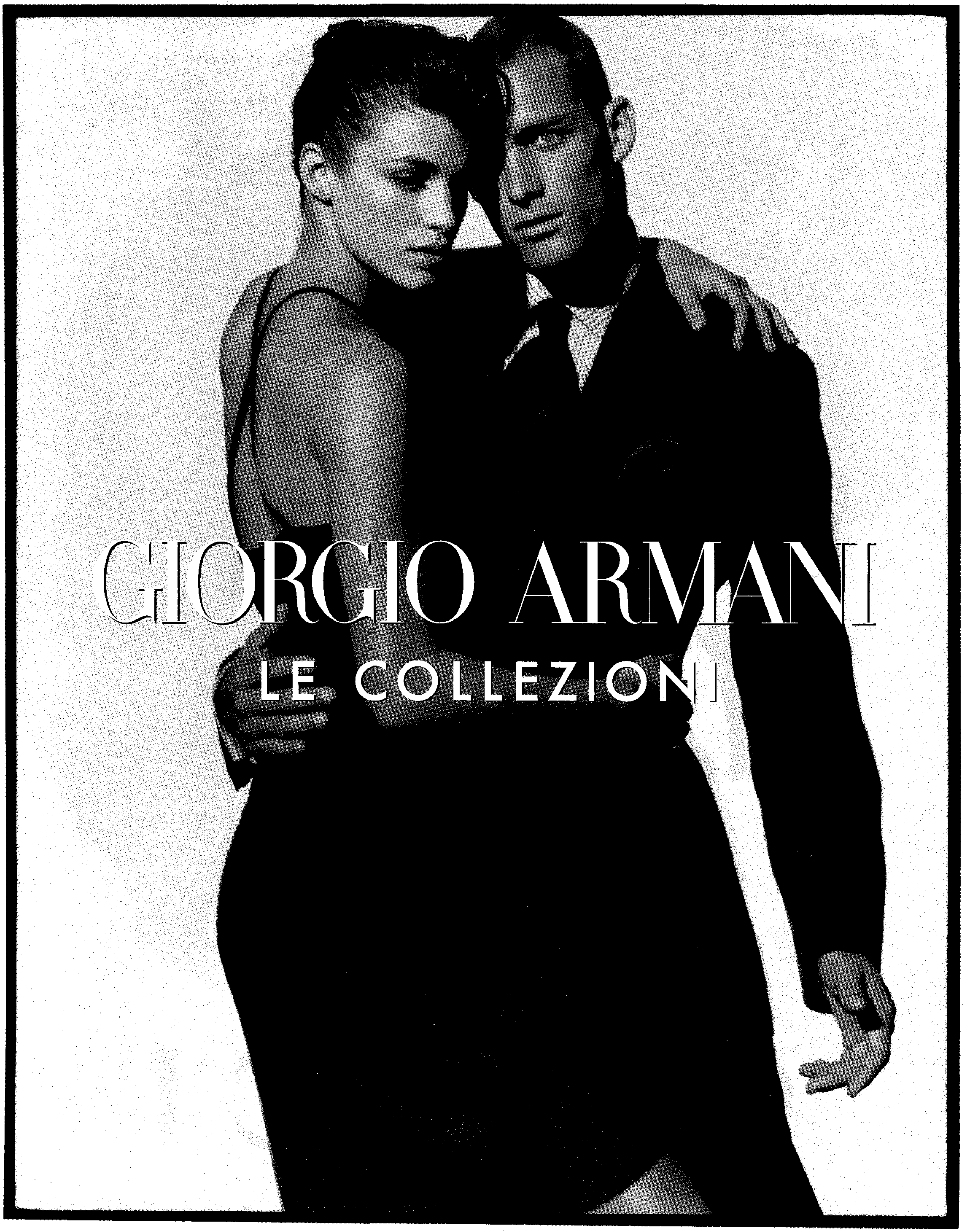
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AS NEAR TO ETERNITY AS WE'LL EVER COME—*CHARLES SIEBERT*

GOTHAM

Letter From Rikers

Hard time in 23-hour-a-day lockdown at the city jail

THIS IS MY THIRD DAY in solitary confinement at Rikers Island. I have been sent here because I told a police officer who wouldn't give me my asthma medication that he could kiss my ass, and that if I saw him in New York I'd kill him. Then I tried my best to play the role of an innocent inmate who'd been falsely accused, but for some reason it didn't work. Now I have been placed in the bing for 30 days.

I decided it wouldn't be that bad. Little did I know what I had gotten myself into. The bing is 23-hour lockdown. That means you are not allowed out of your cell except for one hour, when you can go outside. The yard is in a little cage; basically, it's like a big cell. When you go to the yard, you are handcuffed and left to walk around the cage like that. There are basketball hoops but there aren't any basketballs, and if there were, who could play basketball handcuffed? There are no weights. There's nothing to do but fight. Even that's hard to do handcuffed, but it happens every time they let us out.

They take your clothes from you in the bing, and they give you three jumpsuits. You're not allowed to smoke, but I came in well prepared with a pack's worth of tobacco wrapped in three fingers of a plastic glove and stuck up my asshole. That's what we inmates call

(continued on page 18)

SPIN CYCLE

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF P.R.

Extraordinarily Serious Cookies

- "290 city food programs . . . turned away 14,996 people in 1997 because they did not have enough food to meet demand."
  —Newsday
- "I think the problem has to do with ordering in the city's food office. The money is there, but the food was just not flowing."
  —Judith Walker, executive director of New York City Coalition Against Hunger
- "The city is spending tens of thousands of its emergency food dollars on foods with questionable nutritional value. . . . The city spent $16,920 for 500 cases of Fig Newtons."
  —NY1
- "Food banks get plenty of cookies donated; the one thing we never have to purchase is junk food."
  —Lucy Cabrera, president of Food for Survival
- "As cookies go, Fig Newtons are a wholesome cookie and a source of calories and carbohydrates, both of which translate into energy."
  —Ann Smith, Nabisco spokesperson

CAMEO

Yep, I'm Media-Savvy

SO I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF MY BIG INTERVIEW with *Variety,* and the reporter goes, hey Chastity Bono, why's *Ellen* slipping in the ratings? I'm thinking, you're the one from *Variety,* don't you have teams of experts to detect even slight tremors in the fan base of *Moesha*? I'm just the media director of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. And that's when it dawns on me. Gay . . . Lesbian . . . *that's* why they're asking me. So I say something about people not being able to deal with how gay Ellen is, and *bam!* Next thing I know I'm on the front page as the world's biggest homophobe. So fine, I called my mom and cried. And then that's in the paper the next day, too! I didn't know she'd go all Linda Tripp on me. Ratings, schmatings; I bet this never happens to the Nielsens. Whoever they are.

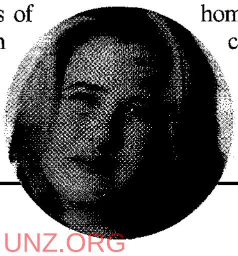


Illustration by Luba Lukova. Photograph by Lacy Atkins/AP/Wide World.

Rikers *continued from page 17*

"boofin'," or stuffing, and it's a common way of carrying contraband around the jail. I was rolling the cigarettes in Bible paper, even though I know that's a sin, but recently I started to feel guilty about it, so now I've been rolling them in toilet-paper wrappers.

Today is my fourth day in the bing, and I am starting to go crazy in this little cell. I am getting sick and tired of hearing everyone screaming. The cell that I'm in is right next to Mel, the noisiest prisoner in the cell block. When he's not screaming, he's singing some stupid song or just rambling some stupid words at the top of his lungs while he plays the drums with his cup, hitting it against his metal sink or kicking the door for no reason at all. He's been in the bing for 63 days already, and I think it's made him a little nuts.

Today is my fifth day. I feel like time is going slower and slower. Today, I actually saw the corrections officers skip somebody's cell on the feeding. The officer said, "Oooh, now you want something from me, but before you were cursing at me." The person in the cell still hasn't eaten. He's screaming and yelling. And the corrections officers are just laughing.

I feel like this is the roughest jail time I've ever done. This time it's for drug offenses. But solitary confinement makes you crazy and thirsty for everything that you can't get while you're in here. It doesn't rehabilitate you. It really makes you ready to go on some kind of binge when you get out.

Today was supposed to be my seventh day in the bing, but this morning they came and woke me up and told me to pack up. I was packed in a minute flat.

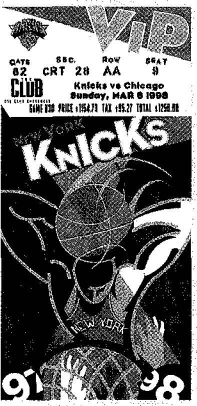
I finally realized this time around that jail is a criminal training camp. It gives criminals a chance to get their physical strength back. And most of the people who are in here needed the rest.

JASON FLANDERS

SPORTS

Would Spike Lee Be Caught Dead at a Nets Game?

THE GAMES BETWEEN THE AGING New York Knicks and the insurgent New Jersey Nets have been vicious, bruising affairs this season. But the teams' off-court battle could end up being the fiercest. A Nets executive was recently spotted at a Knicks game attempting to poach some of the celebrities who are treated to courtside tickets at Madison Square Garden. One well-known entertainer was offered choice seats at Nets games and limousine service to and from the Meadowlands, as well as a ball-boy gig for his son.



Lee's $1,250 ticket.

This development is especially ominous given that the Knicks pride themselves on leading the league in coddling celebrities. "No one feels dirty about it," says team president Ernie Grunfeld, who must've been pleased to see Jersey's own Bruce Springsteen watching the recent Bulls game in a seat that would've cost a lesser man $1,250.

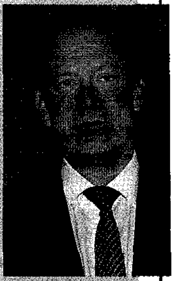
"I'd sit anywhere," said Elle MacPherson, who was there, too, clutching a Knicks teddy bear, a gift for her new baby. "I'm just honored they want me to sit courtside."

The Nets, meanwhile, make do with Danny Aiello, Bruce Willis, and Rick Moranis. And that's just fine, insists John Mertz, their director of P.R.—they're not trying to steal anyone. "We're not roaming the Hollywood studios looking for possible attendees," he says, conceding that they would not be above "providing transportation to and from the game."

"You can understand why they want what the Knicks have," says Matthew Modine, after halftime in Suite 200, the Garden's exclusive club for celebrities. He's been approached by the Nets, but Jersey's just not for him. "Look at what an embarrassment it's been for Giants and Jets fans since their teams left the city," he says. JACOB LEWIS

POLITICS

The Long Hard Road out of Heck



DESPITE HIS MANY SUCCESSES, GEORGE PATAKI HAS DEVELOPED AN UNFAIR REPUTAtion as a rather bland fellow with a not-so-memorable personality. *Where I Come From*, his forthcoming memoir, should put an end to all that. The book's publication—which, as it happens, coincides with rumors of the governor's national political ambitions—reveals a hitherto-undreamed-of Pataki, a man (like any other . . . and yet, somehow, not) of vibrancy and daring, a man whose past is as thrillingly checkered as his future is bright. SARAH BERNARD

● **CRIPPLING ADDICTIONS**
"Dad always brought me a piece of candy from one of the merchants downtown. He knew everyone in Peekskill, and everyone knew his routine, and part of that routine meant bringing a candy for lunch with Georgie."

● **RELENTLESS SELF-PROMOTION**
"Of course, I don't take credit for the Hudson's rehabilitation but I am proud to have played a role."

● **WARRIOR MENTALITY**
"I met my campaign volunteers, armed with posters and ad cards. . . . In a battle, you do everything you possibly can to win, for as long as you possibly can, until there is nothing left to do."

● **VORACIOUS THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE**
"I eagerly looked forward to my monthly subscription to *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, which my Aunt Helen had given me."

● **ECOTERRORISM**
"I remember working at the Fleischmanns factory during vacations, and if I turned the wrong valve I could actually see an overflow of brown or green sludge pour into the river below."

● **TELEPATHIC ABILITIES**
"I took the pulse of those commuters on their way home after work and put myself over the top. . . . There was energy in that station that seemed to flow toward me."

● **FAMILY'S GLOBAL CONSPIRACY**
"Dad was an American and his impulse was to maximize productivity. Grandpa was European, and he would grow just enough that he could tend each plant individually."

● **TRASH TALKING**
"If Grandpa had run this farm the way some of my colleagues approached the business of government, his fields would have been barren."

● **BINGE DRINKING**
"My father had a Beck's. He always had a Beck's. I usually drank whatever was on tap."

● **FRATERNIZING WITH UNDESIRABLES**
"I went on the air with [Howard Stern] a few times . . . and he was always respectful and well-prepared."

● **HEDONISTIC SEVENTIES LIFESTYLE**
"[Libby and I] lived . . . right off Central Park, in the middle of all kinds of excitement. . . . We used to go out every night—to eat, to drink, to make merry."

● **FLUENCY IN STREET ARGOT**
"Above all, family farming teaches you to be real."

Photograph by James Leynse/Saba.

ECONOMICS

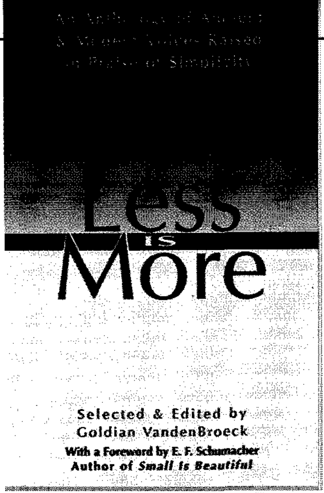
Drop Shopping?!

Voluntary simplicity is nice, but so's a sale at Macy's.

ALL ALONG 59TH STREET, IT was a typically bustling day—people shopping, rushing about, wondering what Vernon Jordan said—but in the basement auditorium of the Lighthouse, no one was interested in the events outside.

At least they were trying not to be. They were staying focused on the lessons of voluntary simplicity, such as how to be, as one of the movement's mottos puts it, "outwardly more simple and inwardly more rich." Aside from contemplating the environment and personal values, that entails buying and owning less stuff. And that's a hard lesson to learn sitting in a room halfway between Bloomingdale's and the Caviarteria—or in any other spot in New York, for that matter.

"I know this on an intellectual level," said an exasperated attendee, after yet another speaker mentioned the high toll Americans take on the earth's resources. "But then Macy's says '50 percent off all items,' and I go shop. So what do I do?"


An Anthology of Ancient & Modern Voices Raised in Praise of Simplicity
Less is More
Selected & Edited by
Goldian VandenBroeck
With a Foreword by E. F. Schumacher
Author of *Small Is Beautiful*

Voluntary simplicity's best-seller.

Voluntary simplicity has become a phenomenon in many parts of the country—especially those where shopping passes for a cultural activity—but so far it hasn't quite swept New York.

Yet urban conditions could be working in the movement's favor. "I'm unemployed, so the simplicity thing fits right in," says a man named Anthony, from Queens, who a decade ago was a BMW owner and Hamptons renter but who now wishes only to be a writer. "I'm paring things down. I've gotten rid of hundreds of books." And there's always the lack of closet space to recommend the simple life. "I took an inventory of my clothes and carry a list around with me," one immaculately groomed woman said, grabbing the microphone. "And before I buy anything, I always look at the list."

Still, as the conference wore on it became clear that some people would never be won over by simplicity's charms. In the middle of an African-dance performance that appeared to involve a whirling pile of laundry, a woman squeezed her way to the aisle and left—clobbering several people along the way with her Barneys shopping bag and New York *Times*.

And while awaiting a talk that encouraged the would-be simple to record their every financial transaction (à la Warhol), Stephen, a black-clad Calvin Klein executive, questioned his place in a simple world. "How can I feel empowered, rather than feeling like a failed babyboomer because I'm not living as well as my parents? I make six figures and live for the next paycheck. There's something wrong." Others here, a little closer to the trend known as involuntary poverty, would no doubt have agreed. ALYSSA KATZ

COLLECTING

The Tale of the Perverted Penny Thief

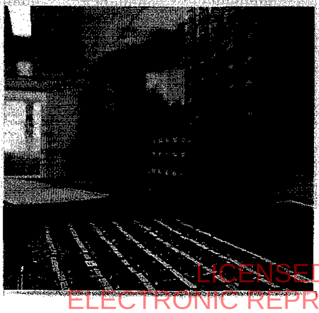
IN THE INSULAR WORLD OF COIN COLLECTORS—not the kids with penny jars but the real hard-core, the lifers—Dr. William Sheldon ranked as a giant. His reputation as the world's expert on American large cents (precursors to pennies) seemed untarnishable—even though, as was reported a few years ago, he'd spent decades photographing nude Ivy League and Seven Sisters students, in the name of physiognomic research. Denis Loring, a disciple, remembers first meeting him: "It was like the pilgrim coming to Mecca. This was The Man."

But that all changed when Loring, among others, discovered that Sheldon had committed the ultimate crime: In the course of his research at the American Numismatic Society, where his portrait hung and his books ranked as bibles, he had copped 129 early-American large cents and replaced them with coins of inferior value. "I took Sheldon's picture off the wall," says John Kleeberg, a curator at the society, "and chucked it in the garbage."

Now a judge has ordered Roy Naftzger Jr., a wealthy Beverly Hills cattle rancher who purchased Sheldon's coin collection in 1972, to return 38 of his coins to the society and pay $229,500 in damages for twenty others that he has since sold. Naftzger is appealing the decision, and in the meantime, Sheldon's disciples are trying to make sense of a world in which even the god of large cents could be a common thief.

"His research has to be thrown out or reexamined," Kleeberg says. "You can't be a scholar and a liar, because after a while no one can trust what you say." The last issue of the Early American Coppers club newsletter likened Sheldon to a nineteenth-century robber baron. Loring takes solace in another comparison. "Richard Wagner was a brilliant composer and a vicious anti-Semite," he says. "It seems that lots of creative geniuses have feet of clay." JOHANNA BERKMAN

Sheldon's former workroom.



GARDENING

Early Bloomers

THE UNUSUALLY BALMY winter has been a blessing to vacation-deprived New Yorkers, and Parks Commissioner Henry Stern recently suggested that it's "been great on our trees." But for those who tend to the trees, as well as the flowers and the grass, the past months of warm weather have been a spell of bad luck.

"It's too warm too early," says Sarah Price, manager of display gardens at the New York Botanical Gardens. "We're about three weeks ahead of schedule for everything. Tulips are up two or three inches, which is very unusual for this time of year. The magnolias are ready to pop, cherries, everything."

These premature blooms and young leaves are fragile, horticulturists say, and any cold snap—such as last week's—could take a high toll. "It will totally destroy the flower, which can keep the tree from flowering for another year," says Timothy Tinman, a gardener at Fort Tryon Park, where azaleas are blossoming four weeks early. "If there's enough weight because of ice, it will also break branches."

***Crocus tomasinianus* in bloom.**

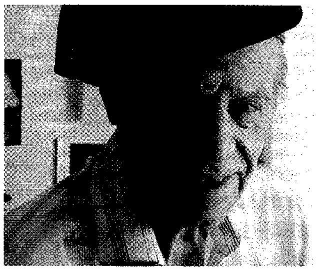
So while the rest of the city basks in the sunshine, gardeners are hoping for a brutal winter next year. "You're safer with weather that's more normal," says Judith Zuk, president of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, "meaning it gets cold and it stays cold." MICHAEL STEELE

THE JURY

DELIBERATIONS AND VERDICTS FROM THE STREET

● THIS WEEK, WE INTRODUCE A HAND-PICKED GROUP OF NEW YORKERS—UNDENIABLY DIVERSE AND unashamedly opinionated—as our permanent panel of all-around experts. We'll be asking them periodically to weigh in on a range of subjects. But first, to get started, let's find out who they are. JOHN BOWE

YASUKO YOKOSHI
Born 1961, Hiroshima, Japan
Residence Williamsburg
History Trained in Tokyo as a bilingual secretary; came to America to study English, ended up studying dance at Hampshire College; now a freelance choreographer. Divorced.
Are you fair? "It's my motto: If you want others to be fair to you, be fair to them."
Are you a typical New Yorker? "I'm not. I'm a foreigner. And I'm very extreme."
Any ideas for a more civil city? "I'd have a lot of public bathrooms so you wouldn't have to buy a coffee just to use the bathroom someplace. It's really the most uncivil thing."



BERNARD LIVINGSTON
Born 1911, Baltimore, Md.
Residence Upper West Side
History Admitted to Maryland bar at age 21; managed a burlesque house; joined Communist Party; made documentary films; wrote four books. Divorced.
Are you fair? "I was born in a bourgeoisie family, and yet I was able to see the plight of the working class. That objective quality pervades my thinking."
Are you a typical New Yorker? "Most New Yorkers like sports, beer, and rushing around. I walk very slowly, I know how many symphonies Mozart wrote."
Any ideas for a more civil city? "More community meetings. It'd be like a mass therapy session."

HECTOR MARTINEZ
Born 1967, Mexico City, Mexico
Residence Williamsburg
History Arrived in New York as a teen; worked in a factory; served as caretaker for Keith McNally; opened a restaurant. Three children by his girlfriend.
Are you fair? "Between the way I grew up and the fact that so many people ask me, 'What should I do with my life?' I've studied at the university of life."
Are you a typical New Yorker? "No one is typical. Everyone comes from all over the world."
Any ideas for a more civil city? "I would employ psychological methods, funny pictures, advertisements, and maybe chase away the loud, drunken people."

YOLANDE ROUSSEAU
Born 1932, San Juan, Trinidad
Residence Bedford-Stuyvesant
History After high school, sang and sewed for the Ambakila Theater Group; now works as a seamstress. Divorced, remarried, six kids.
Are you fair? "I'm an open person. I'm impartial to everybody, even my children."
Are you a typical New Yorker? "I've been here for a long time. I'm used to the place. I'm used to the people."
Any ideas for a more civil city? "You know when you ask someone for directions and they don't answer? I'd make a law that they had to be polite and answer in a positive way."

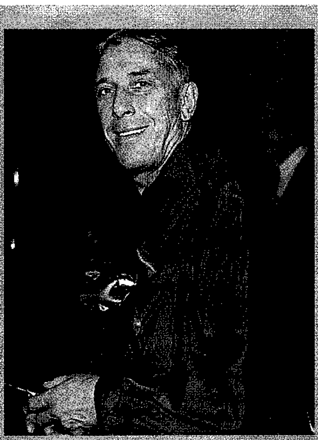
THE SCENE

The Fame Game

Photographs by Patrick McMullan
Text by Vanessa Grigoriadis

"IT'S ABSOLUTELY THE MOST devastating and important book of the last decade," declared Brooke Astor. "If anything is *it*, this is it." Gay Talese agreed. The epoch-making volume under discussion at this candlelit party at the New York Public Library was not the latest volume by a Nobel laureate but *Other Powers*, Barbara Goldsmith's chronicle of a Victorian-era prostitute, psychic, and presidential candidate. The author's own historical perspective served to shed some light on the nature of this lavish praise. "The Victorian time was exactly the same as now," she said. "People worshiped celebrity. You were famous for being famous."

Bianca Jagger and Toni Goodale at '21' with Literacy Partners.



John Cale at the Waldorf-Astoria following Tibet House's concert.

Cynthia Cooper and Teresa Weatherspoon at a luncheon for the National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations.

Richard Reeves, Vartan Gregorian, Abe Rosenthal, Gay Talese, and Mortimer Levitt at the book party for Barbara Goldsmith's *Other Powers*.

Alex Lasky, Patricia Herrera, and Anh Duong at Wax's "End of the Winter" party.

Photographs by Michael Kenneth Lopez (4).

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GOTHAMSTYLE

EDITED BY DANY LEVY

Darkness Visible

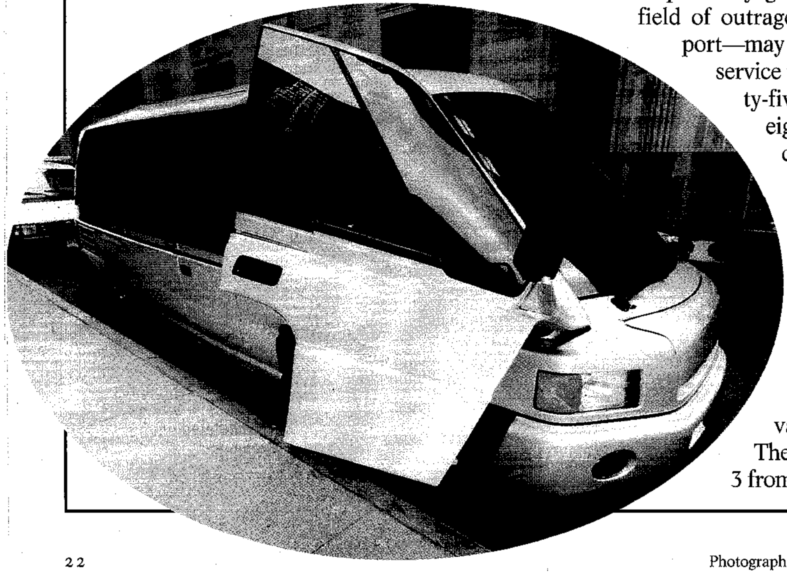
Health hazards are starting to seem sexy again. Judging by the ads for Chanel, Calvin Klein, Guess?, and Nokia, as well as by the beaches of winter-resort destinations, the deep, dark Hawaiian Tropic tan is making a comeback as the medically questionable accessory of choice. It may just end up as this summer's breast implant—which would provide a bracing alternative, at least, to all this season's chaste schoolgirl skirts and pale-pink sweater sets.

ALEXANDRA LANGE

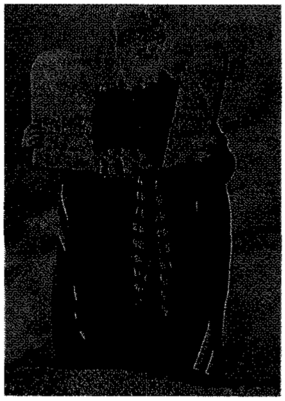
Follow Your Nose

People go to extreme lengths to get hold of Jo Malone's perfumes and skin-care products. Clients flock to her expensive London shop and spa, Barbra Streisand and Diana Ross have her extra-thick lotions and clean-smelling fragrances shipped across the seas, and Jordan's Queen Noor has even been known to fly Malone over for private royal consultations. As of next week, however, New Yorkers can skip the drama and head straight to Bergdorf Goodman, where her elegantly spare products will be available at a new boutique bearing her name. Prices range from $40 for soap to $100 for 200 ml. of bath oil.

Coming Soon to a Traffic Jam Near You



The Hampton Voyager—the latest entrant into the field of outrageously luxe East End transport—may look somewhat *T2*, but the service is decidedly James Bond: Sixty-five dollars gets each of its eight passengers cell-phone access, a fax machine, satellite television, hookups for laptops, free drinks, and Kathleen's Cookies. "There's a prize out there for anyone who can figure out what to call it," says Andy Mauck, the designer who created the hulking coach. "It's a mini bus or a mega van, whichever you prefer." The maiden voyage departs April 3 from East 52nd and 72nd Streets.



Take Two Tablets And Call Him In the Morning

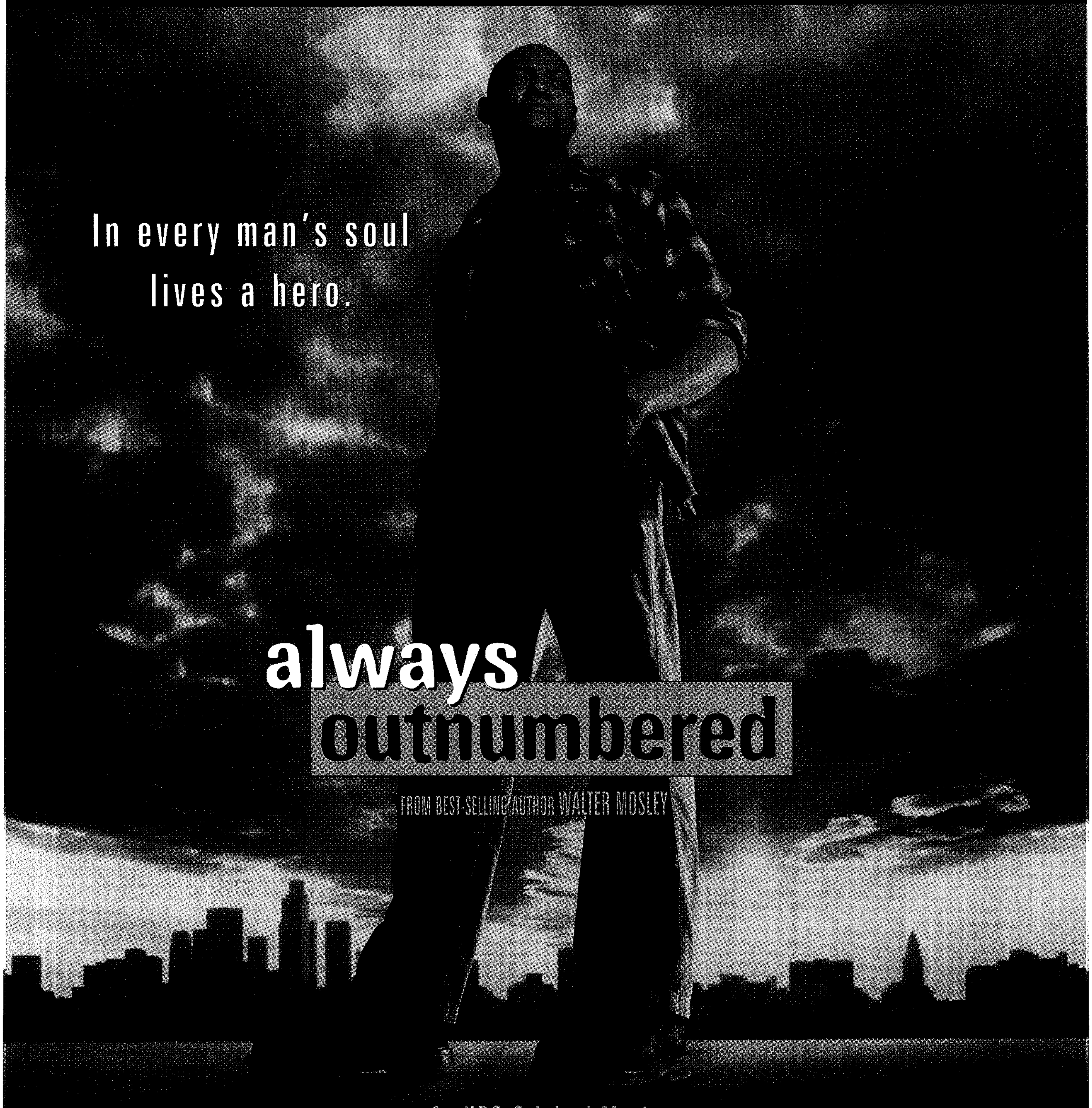
If Dr. Leonard Felder, a Los Angeles psychologist, has his way, the next trendy book to emerge as the bible of self-help will be the Bible itself. His unique approach, which is proving popular with entertainment-industry executives, is based on the healing value of the Ten Commandments. Or one version of them, anyway, based on the original Hebrew. Instead of "Thou shalt not kill," he urges patients not to crush another person's spirit. Instead of "I am the Lord thy God," Felder reads, "Discover the still small voice within." And where literalists are forbidden to take the Lord's name in vain, Felder encourages people to control their "anger, insecurity, and self-righteousness." A Hollywood director recently confessed that every time he read about his colleagues' successes in *Variety*, he "died a little"; Felder looked to the Tenth Commandment (the one about not coveting your neighbor's possessions) and advised "Feel good about what you have." He says the kinder, gentler readings—which are now available in his book *The Ten Challenges*—help creative but fragile patients "feel relieved that they can finally forgive themselves for how hard life is. Most people grew up unable to question their religion," Felder says. "Now they're telling me they want a less guilt-ridden approach." Says one follower, a certain Mario Cuomo: "This is all it really takes to feel fulfilled, justified, and content."

KATE COYNE

Photographs: clockwise from top left, courtesy of Guess? Inc.; Kobal Collection; Bernd Auers; Steve Wisbauer.

“LAURENCE FISHBURNE GIVES A FABULOUS PERFORMANCE...GRADE: A.”

—*People Magazine*



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CITYSIDE CHRIS MITCHELL

Dr. Crew's Midterm

Schools Chancellor Rudy Crew is about to launch a huge private fund-raising effort, but it's not just money he's after. He wants to change the way people see public education.

FOR SCHOOLS CHANCELLOR RUDY Crew, every day is a game of hopscotch. Breakfast may find him in a midtown hotel sharing management maxims with business leaders. By noon, he'll be striding down the halls of a crumbling prewar school that can't attract or keep more than a handful of qualified teachers.

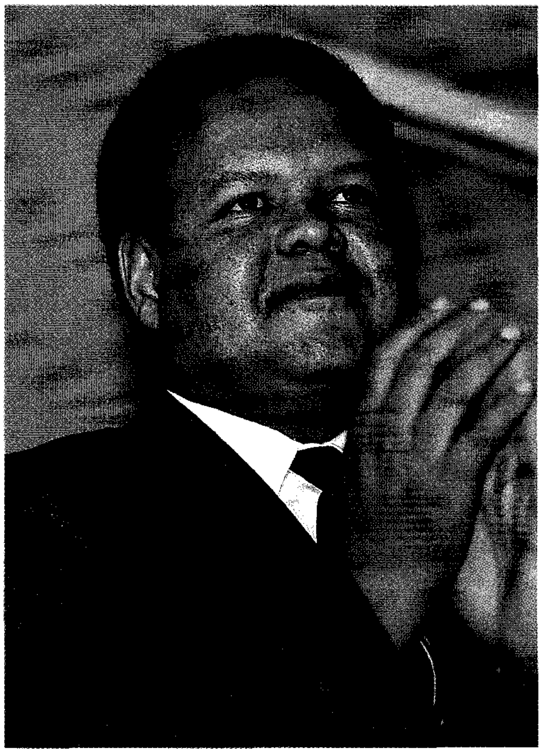
"You wouldn't train a dog in some of these places," Crew told a Plaza hotel audience last fall.

Crew is not the first schools chancellor to lead such a double life. But he is trying to bring these two worlds closer together, a project his predecessors only barely attempted to carry out. For more than a year, Crew has been at work on an elaborate structure for funneling private funds into the largest public-school system in the country. After several false starts—including a brief push to create a business-leadership council chaired by his old pal Bill Cosby—the chancellor is now aiming to launch a high-powered development office at the Board of Ed.

Of course, even if Crew's efforts prove wildly successful—if he, say, quadrupled the total of private contributions—it would still add up to less than 4 percent of the system's $9 billion annual budget. That's "chump change," in the estimation of Time Warner president Dick Parsons, one of Crew's most important allies in this mission.

But Crew, who began cultivating the support of major business leaders within days of his October 1995 arrival, understands that raising private money isn't just about buying sorely needed computers or textbooks or gym equipment. It also goes a long way toward changing perceptions of the system itself. And image management is something Crew can't afford to overlook. Even at Bill Bratton's NYPD, which could cite new numbers on falling crime almost weekly, substantive improvement was considered only half the battle. "It wasn't enough simply to bring about change," the ex-commissioner wrote in *Turnaround,* his recent autobiography. "We had to sell a better image of the department."

Crew prefers the word *vision,* but the meaning is the same. "The issue is, can you gain and gather the momentum and support for what you do," says the chancellor, who sees a Judgment Day for large public-school systems looming five to seven years away. "If these people believe the school system is worth it, they'll put their money here—frankly, they'll put their children here," he says. "That's my goal."



Give him a hand(out): Crew courts the private sector.

As it is, Crew has already gotten a lot of mileage out of his "vision." Though he's hugely popular, his accomplishments remain largely in blueprint form. His single greatest achievement—convincing Albany to pass a historic reform bill that gives him greater authority over the city's 32 community school districts—is so far little more than a new flowchart that looks great on paper. Reading scores were up citywide last spring for the second year in a row, but many experts withheld praise on the grounds that new test rules could be responsible for the gains. To sustain his momentum, then, Crew needs more tangible results.

THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE CREW IS ABOUT to create fits into a larger experiment in harnessing private-sector support for the schools. In January, the New York City Partnership and Chamber of Commerce, one of the city's leading business groups, pledged to raise $30 million to support a five-year pilot project, dreamed up by Crew, that's meant to boost the performance of superintendents, principals, and teachers in three community school districts by offering them bonus-pay incentives. And a year ago, City Hall took on a $50 million fund-raising campaign to help put networked computers into every middle-school classroom in the city.

Taken together, those two projects—one aimed at furthering managerial reform and the other at filling a pressing infrastructural need—represent the biggest fund-raising challenge the schools have ever presented to the city's business community.

And there's more. By next June, Crew predicts, the business community's ties to the high schools will be strong enough that the city's major employers will be able to promise a future job to every student who earns a diploma. "This represents a major commitment to young people," says the chancellor. "It says, 'We'll guarantee you placement at the economic table in this city if you do these things, if you show up with these skills.' "

The new development office's main function amid all this activity will be to ensure that not an ounce of goodwill is squandered. "Our sense is, the board fritters away loads of opportunities," says Deputy Chancellor Harry Spence. Crew wants the procurement arm of the office headed by someone who can meet with top business leaders and secure pledges. The other arm will inventory

Photograph by Evan Agostini/Gamma Liaison.

the needs of the system and try to match them with the interests of the donors, even when the gifts are small. You have an old clarinet and a carton of crayons you'd like to give away? This office is supposed to put those contributions into the school where they can be put to best use.

In this way, it may ease Crew's concerns about equity that were spotlighted last December when the chancellor ordered some $46,000 returned to a group of middle-class parents in a Greenwich Village elementary school who had raised the sum to save the job of a classroom teacher.

If the new fund-raising venture delivers even the appearance of success, it would be a significant breakthrough for the schools. But just filling the top position has been a headache. Crew all but tailored the donation-matching post for Lisa Belzberg, president of the school-booster organization known as PENCIL. Through PENCIL, which sponsors events like Principal for a Day, the 34-year-old Belzberg has worked to polish the image of the schools while grooming a new generation of philanthropists. It was largely through her efforts, for example, that VH1 chairman John Sykes launched a campaign that put $1 million worth of musical instruments in the schools. The aim of such programs, Belzberg believes, is not just to raise money but also to engage as many people as possible in what's happening with the schools. "It has to do with who's staying in the city and not going to the burbs," she says. "It has to do with people saying, 'You know, I'd love to have a second kid, but I couldn't possibly afford it in the city unless I do the public schools.' "

Belzberg has close ties to Crew, but she had her second baby recently, and she's not sure she's ready to take on the huge new responsibilities he's got in mind for her. She will, however, continue with PENCIL for the time being, and in her own way help Crew soften up a corporate community that has not been terribly generous to the schools. A full year since Mayor Giuliani launched the three-year $50 million fund-raising drive for middle-school computers, the private sector has ponied up only $1.1 million—and all but $100,000 of that from a foundation led by one of the campaign's co-chairmen. In 1993, *TV Guide* magnate Walter Annenberg challenged the philanthropic communities in New York and several other cities to match his enormous gifts to their public schools. Many of those cities met their targets easily, but not New York, where the small-schools experiment funded by Annenberg has yet to meet its $25 million target, which is half what Philadelphia raised in half the time. A smaller challenge grant for restoring arts in the schools has fared better, but a third Annenberg initiative, spearheaded by former chancellor Ramon Cortines and Annenberg confidant Vartan Gregorian, was a disaster. Designed to restructure middle schools, it ended up demonstrating how dangerous it can be to dictate to benefactors where their dollars should go.

"There's still a lot of anger out there," says Spence. "The foundations felt presumed upon by Annenberg. They said, 'You can't assume we'll come up with another [$25] million without even talking to us—forget it, we're not going to do it.' " By centralizing the management of school charity, Crew could be risking a similar backlash. "By and large," says Diane Ravitch, the former assistant U.S. secretary of Education, "the business community feels that if you put money in the Board of Education rather than in individual schools, you'll never see any results from it."

THERE'S ANOTHER REASON CREW NEEDS TO court the business community: If the private sector doesn't give to him, it could very well turn to education initiatives that work *against* the public schools. "There's a real threat to public education involved here," says Robert Kiley, president of the New York City Partnership. "Most of the people in the Partnership are committed to making the system work much better, even if it requires radical change. If it doesn't happen over the next several years, then I think you'll find businesspeople who will be going off in very different directions. The voucher program may take on much more significance; charter schools may take on a different meaning. You'll find a massive movement toward alternatives outside the existing system."

Already, city philanthropists are pouring close to $8 million a year into two programs—including one championed by Mayor Giuliani—that awards poor students with scholarships so they can opt out of the public schools. Tellingly, one of the movement's leaders, investment banker Peter Flanigan, began his philanthropic career a dozen years ago by adopting a sixth-grade class in the South Bronx and trying to improve its prospects by working inside the public schools. "The only way you can reform them is from competition," he says now. "I think this reform is going to be from the outside." ▬

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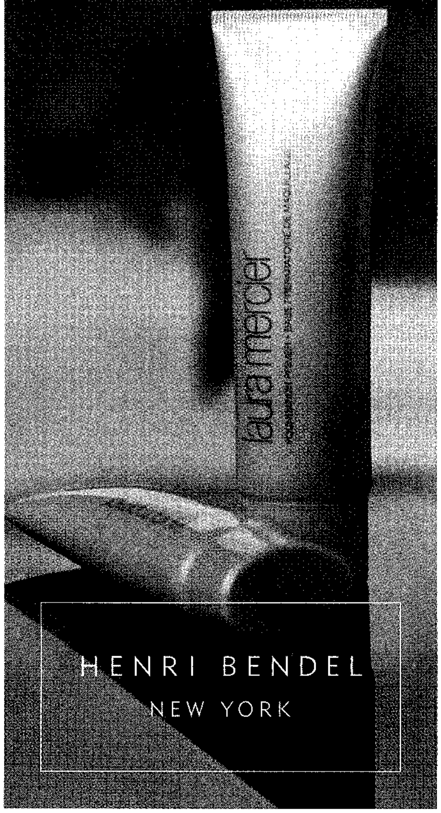


HENRI BENDEL
NEW YORK

MEDIA SARAH KERR

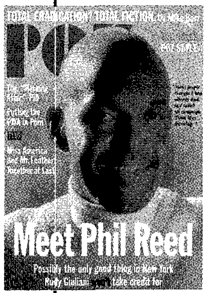
Gloss Action

Can 'Poz,' a lifestyle magazine for people with HIV, hold its audience as the AIDS panic recedes? And will women with cancer read its kid sister, 'Mamm'?

An empire on their own: Megan Whiting and Sean Strub.

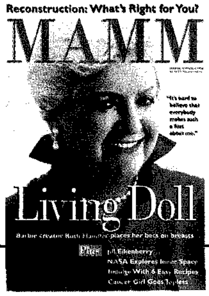
NOT LONG AGO, ONE OF THE more extraordinary features in any magazine—a chart that had been running since 1994 in a glossy start-up called *Poz*—disappeared. An odd grab bag of inspirational profiles of AIDS activists, consumer information, and sniping jabs at Donna Shalala, *Poz* has the passionate devotion to a single topic typical of magazines for car freaks—though in this case, the readers are people with HIV. Its tone has been generally upbeat, but the optimism was sharply undercut by the chart in the back of each issue: a display of the blood counts of *Poz*'s HIV-positive founder and executive editor, Sean Strub. Readers could follow his T-cell counts, lymphs, and triglycerides over time, and the news was not encouraging.

What the counts traced, essentially, was the steady collapse of an immune system. "Around the first anniversary of *Poz,* I had my viral load done and it was 3.3 million, my T4 count had fallen to 0, my body was getting covered with lesions, and I lost 30 pounds," Strub says now. "I sold some insurance policies and got 93 percent of the value—that's how much they expected me to die." But Strub, like thousands of AIDS patients, didn't die, because it was soon after he hit bottom that the *cocktail,* a powerful new therapy combining protease inhibitors and other anti-HIV drugs, came onto the market. Strub started treatment in 1996. By last August, he was able to write in *Poz,* "I feel renewed and I enjoy—with a childlike exuberance—revisiting places, experiences and sensations I thought were forever part of my past." In November, he dropped the chart altogether, though it has since reappeared, testament now to his survival instead of his demise.



With the help of his publisher, Megan Whiting, who happens to be his younger sister, Strub founded two more magazines under the Poz Publishing banner: *Mamm,* devoted to breast and reproductive cancers in women, and *Poz en Español,* a Spanish-language spin-off with its own editorial content. Underpinning all three projects is a peculiarly nineties brand of activism: shrewd, friendly-faced, and at home with some disturbing contradictions. The money behind *Poz* represents an unusual blend of idealism and commerce. Most of the advertising comes from big-gun pharmaceutical companies, which also pony up $2,000 per booth at the educational expos that *Poz* sponsors around the country. More altruistically, small purveyors of alternative medical products get as much as a 50 percent discount off the $10,000 cost of a full-page ad in *Poz,* and natural-health purveyors and AIDS-outreach groups aren't charged for space at the expos. Of the 91,000 copies Strub guarantees advertisers, more than half are distributed free through AIDS organizations or sent free to people who are HIV-positive and can't afford the magazine. After nearly four years, Strub says, *Poz* has finally started turning a small profit. (The magazine went monthly in 1996 and is now applying for an independent audit.)

POZ APPEARS TO HAVE FOUND AN AUDIENCE among the 650,000 to 900,000 people that the Centers for Disease Control estimate to be HIV-positive. But is there a market for a magazine about women's cancers? Sadly, there's no shortage of potential readers: Nearly 3 million women alive today have been diagnosed with some form of breast or reproductive cancer. But these women don't necessarily constitute a community comparable to that of gay men with AIDS (the core, though certainly not all, of *Poz*'s readership). Women with cancer aren't bound by common issues of prejudice and civil rights and confidentiality. Their diseases can take any number of unrelated forms. Perhaps the greatest difference between the HIV and breast-cancer "communities" lies in the style of the activists agitating for a cure. The breast-cancer movement is far milder than the confrontational AIDS groups like ACT UP that took to the streets in the eighties, and even their mellower nineties successors. Cancer activists tend to quietly network, focusing on Congress and tirelessly raising money for research.


Reconstruction: What's Right for You?
MAMM
"It's hard to believe that everybody makes such a fuss about me."
Living Doll
Barbie creator Ruth Handler places her bets on breasts
Plus
Jill Eikenberry
NASA Explores Inner Space
Indulge With 6 Easy Recipes
Cancer Girl Goes Topless

Not surprisingly, then, *Mamm* has so far lacked the punch of *Poz*. In part, the magazine's mix reflects the conflicting strains in organized responses to reproductive cancer: On the one hand, there's the highly visible "Look Good . . . Feel Better" program, a national outreach effort funded by the cosmetics industry to help women maintain self-esteem during cancer treatment. On the other hand are those who believe in reporting treatment controversies and the realities of the disease, no matter how discomfiting.

Mamm is in transition; when the magazine's founding editor, Regan A. Solmo, left after the first issue, Strub called in an old friend, Gwen Darien. Although her background is in contemporary art (during the eighties, she helped run P.S. 1 in Long Island City), Darien comes with the key credential of having survived lymphoma. She wants to give the magazine a more hard-hitting tone while hanging on to the service pieces and profiles that readers respond to.

"Yesterday someone called asking for a recipe for healing food," she says. "But

(continued on page 112)

Photograph: top, Tom LeGoff.

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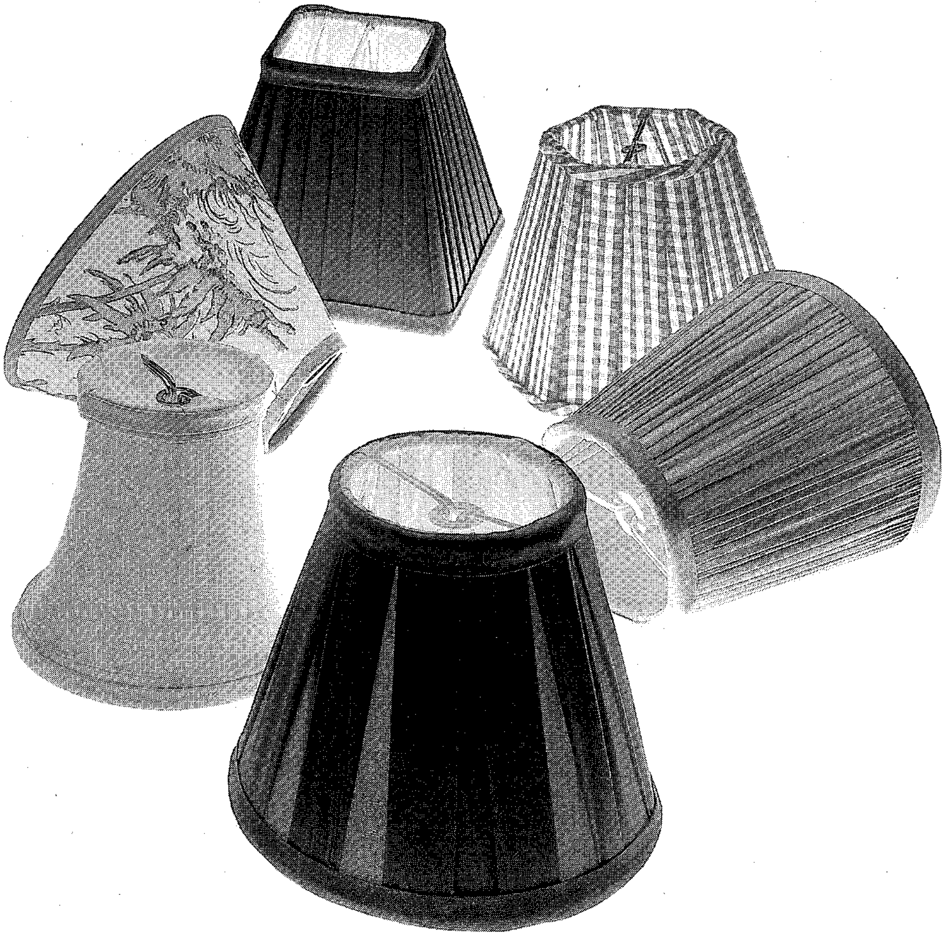

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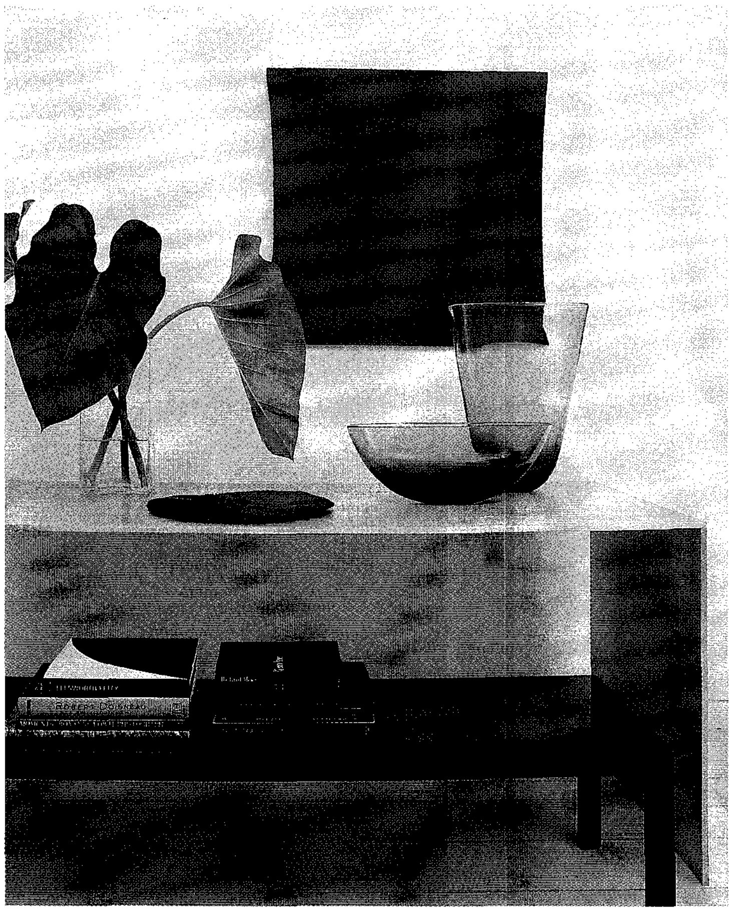

THE STARKER IMAGE: In Troy Halterman's Flatiron District loft.

The seven furniture dealers whose apartments and lofts are pictured herein might disagree on the future of stainless-steel hospital cabinets, Philippe Starck's talents, or the kind of room that cries out to be painted fuchsia. But what they all have in common is a great eye. And the ability to live in the same stylish splendor as their clients. Only dealers have it *better:* Their apartments and lofts, like their stores, are constantly changing stage sets, incorporating the beat-up (but often the very best) from the shops that decree the trends in this big burg of ours. If anything dares get boring, back to the sales floor it goes. And you can bet your stack of Pottery Barn catalogues that the winds of change have already swept through a few of these places—when the door opened to admit yet another Adnet chair. There's a lot of flux when it comes to luxe. Louis Bofferding, whose home is his showroom, just lost his swirl of a chandelier to a Chicago buyer; it could have been disastrous had a natty Directoire number not been waiting in the wings. Stéphane and Catherine de Beyrie, who also live in their home office, refuse to say *au revoir* to their B&B Italia Citterio couch. But little else. Geomancy's John Eaton won't even have his bulky Asian pieces up to his East Village apartment for a visit, for fear that he might furnish himself out of business. Liz O'Brien's home is all fire and ice: White armchairs, she decided, look best when buffeted by rich tomato walls. Troy Halterman test-drove red a few times but crashed and burned. Somehow, he still manages to live dangerously in neutrals. Laurence Kriegel needs white to make the most of her awesome skylight and minimal furniture—even though her Shabby Chic armchairs are about to get chucked. Only Jennifer Jager has it all. There is no subtracting at her Seaport loft, only adding. It helps if you get a good price—dealers and decorators know where to go, but we do, too (see page 58). Just don't kick yourself for the extravagances that slipped away. "Don't look back—that's the dealer mentality," says Forty One's Liz O'Brien. Sounds like good advice to us.

BY WENDY GOODMAN

PRODUCED BY JORDAN SCHAPS

TEXT BY ALEXANDRA LANGE

EDITED BY PHOEBE EATON

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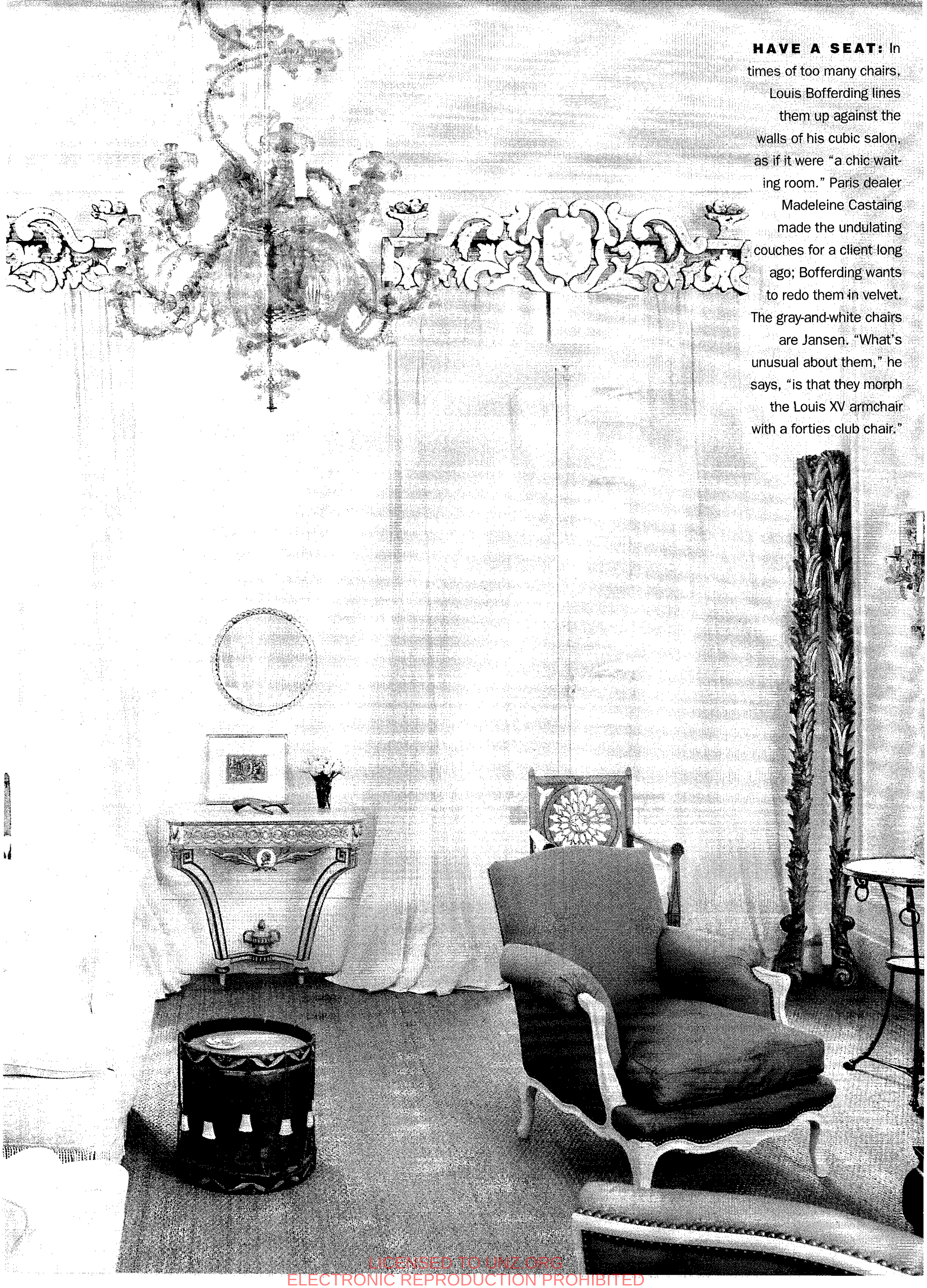
Photograph by Andrew Bordwin.

R. LOUIS BOFFERDING

grace land

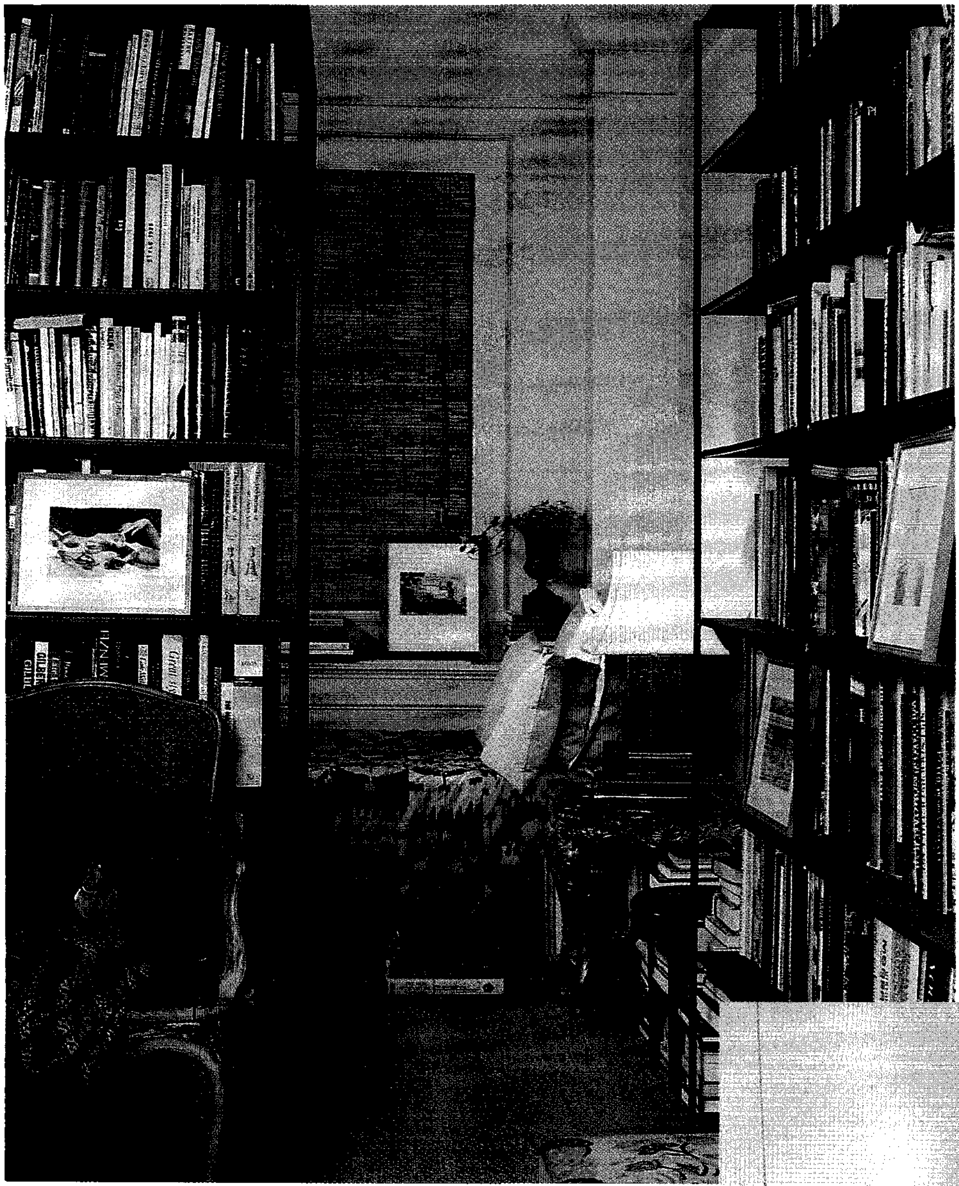
Texas seemed an unlikely place to find nineteenth-century Venetian-mirror valances with lions rampant. Especially the ones that Rose Cumming—interior designer and mistress to Otto Kahn—had for years in her West 53rd Street townhouse. But that's where Louis Bofferding lassoed the greatest extravagance in his East Seventies floor-through. "I walked into a shop in Dallas, and I couldn't believe they'd landed there," he says. "Objects have very complex histories." And Bofferding, apparently, knows them all. The French and Italian pieces he sells out of his salon-cum-showroom are as glamorous as their provenances: Bofferding, who just snatched up two Jansen tables at the Windsor sale, keeps an Elsie de Wolfe mirrored mantelpiece in his office, piles his bedtime reading on Helena Rubinstein's Sicilian table, and sets his coffee cups down on a Napoleonic regimental drum. • He used to be a different kind of salesman. "But in the early nineties, no one was buying contemporary art," he says, still exasperated by it all. "I was trying to sell them the Brice Marden on the wall, and they were more interested in the chair they were sitting on." For a year, Bofferding resisted—"I was an *art* dealer!"—and then . . . "It was like the proverbial lightbulb. I took this place, moved my furniture in, and gave a big cocktail party." This being New York, folks were only too happy to stumble in for free champagne. Bofferding rang up $125,000 in sales—not a bad night's work.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY FERNANDO BENGOECHEA

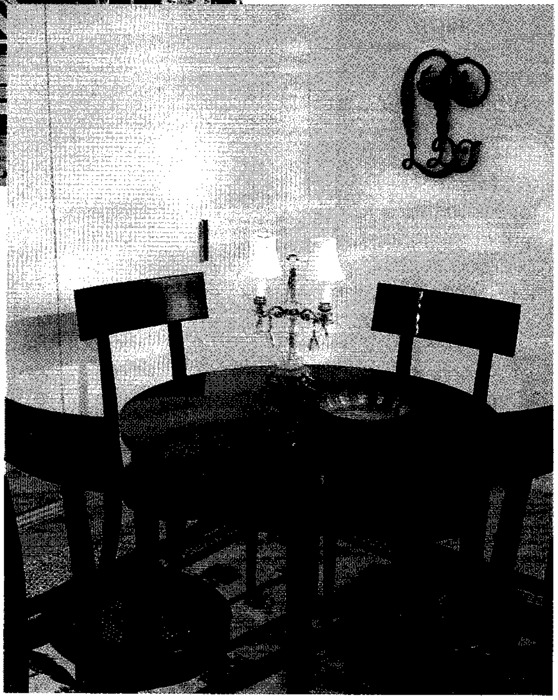


HAVE A SEAT: In times of too many chairs, Louis Bofferding lines them up against the walls of his cubic salon, as if it were "a chic waiting room." Paris dealer Madeleine Castaing made the undulating couches for a client long ago; Bofferding wants to redo them in velvet. The gray-and-white chairs are Jansen. "What's unusual about them," he says, "is that they morph the Louis XV armchair with a forties club chair."

FACE-OFF: A "rogues' gallery" of photos, from Elizabeth Taylor to Prince Felix Yussupov, who helped murder Rasputin. The Baron De Rédé (and Warhol's right hand, Fred Hughes) owned the Georges Jacob sofa before it was reborn in ruby satin; another sofa, from Ireland, got the amethyst-velvet treatment. "I wanted to pit two equally intense jewel tones against each other," says the dealer.



WHO'S MINDING THE STORAGE? Custom bedroom bookshelves look something like "ugly Sixth Avenue skyscrapers. There's something so New York about looking down Sixth Avenue at all those metal boxes," says Bofferding. Elsie de Wolfe used this caned chair to cover her toilet at the Villa Trianon near Versailles.



BLACK BEAUTY: A Jansen lacquer table from the late thirties looks smashing with these fifties ebonized caned chairs. Bofferding snagged another Jansen table "relatively cheaply" at the recent Windsor sale.

Can't find enough
Fantastic end tables—"nothing sells faster."

Inspiring space
"Cy Twombly's apartment in Rome. He has his own paintings, Rauschenbergs, ancient Roman statues combined with eighteenth-century Italian furniture. Most contemporary collectors live in dehumanized white spaces; they've taken their cues from museums—track lighting—and they fill the rooms up with leather sectional sofas."

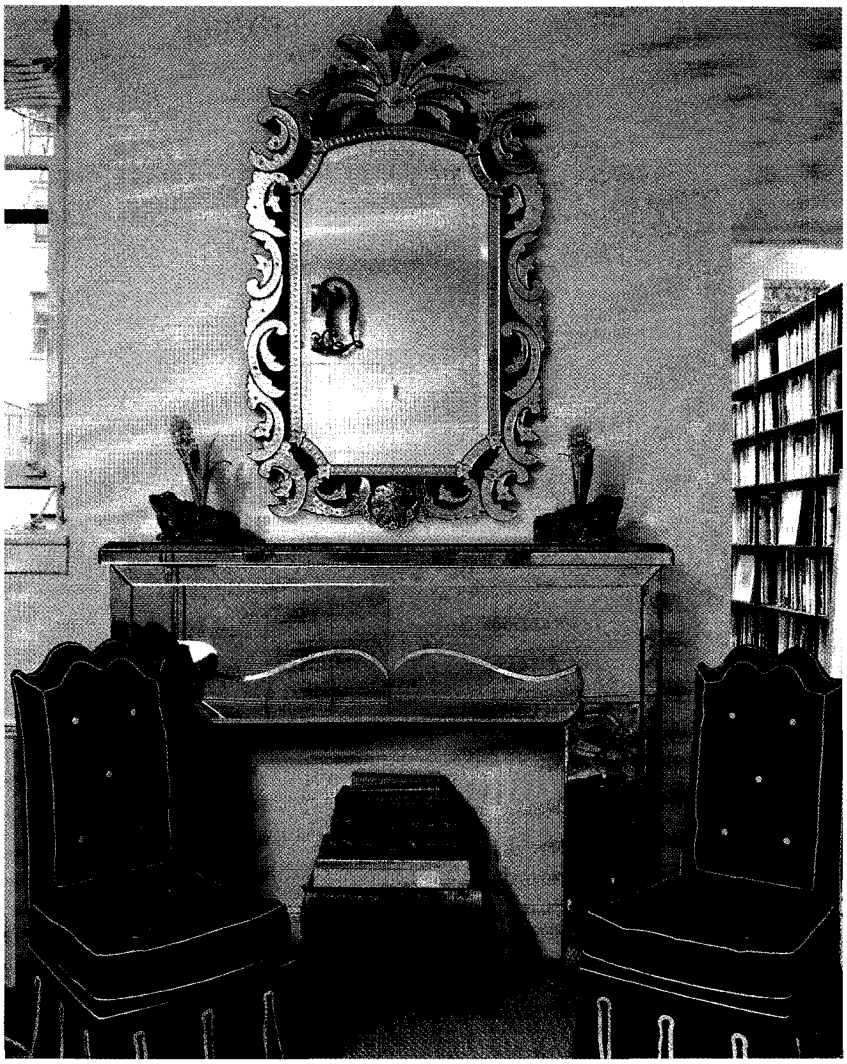
Miss anything that got sold?
"Jean-Michel Frank mica-encrusted coffee tables that were absolutely marvelous." But everything is for sale, with the exception of books and neckties. "The books are sacred."

Unexpected best-sellers
"If people are asking for it, it's cresting; the day will come when I won't sell Jansen for that reason."

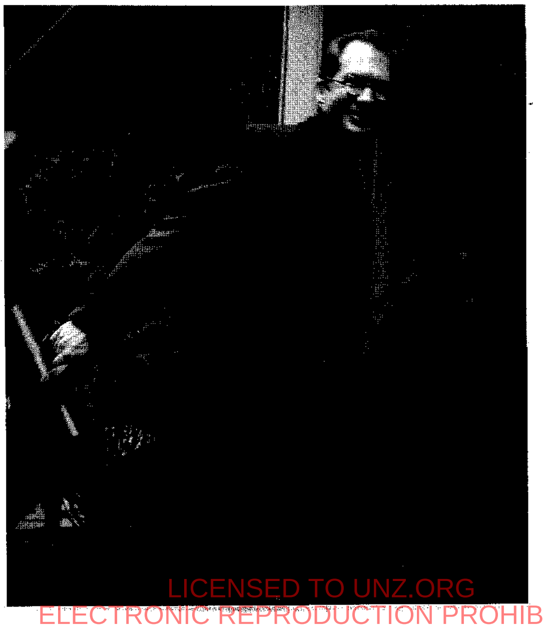
Furniture of today that's a classic of tomorrow
"We're not living through a golden age. The best contemporary design is industrial: computers, computer mice, lighting systems, fishing tackle. Most contemporary furniture design is far too artsy and kitschy. All that horrible architect-designed furniture, Michael Graves stuff. I can't *stand* Philippe Starck."

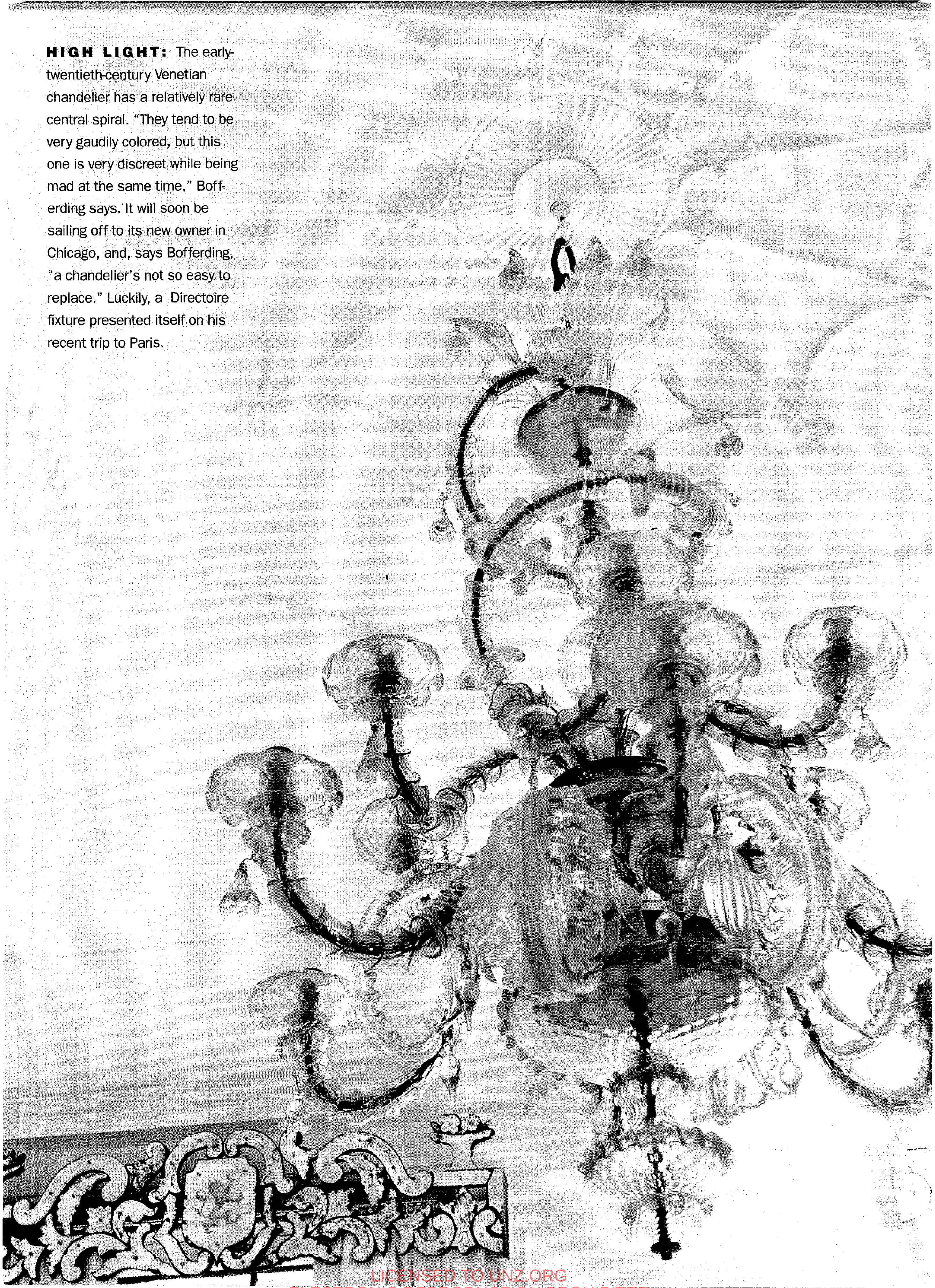
A wise investment
"French forties is the hottest spot in the market, exaggeratedly so. And it makes more sense to buy quality furniture like Louis XV rather than Louis XVI. Everyone's grappling for Louis XVI, but you can get Louis XV for less money."

Favorite low-budget shopping
Upholstery from B&J Fabrics. "They sell fabric for clothing, but a lot of it works for upholstery, like a gray flannel armchair."

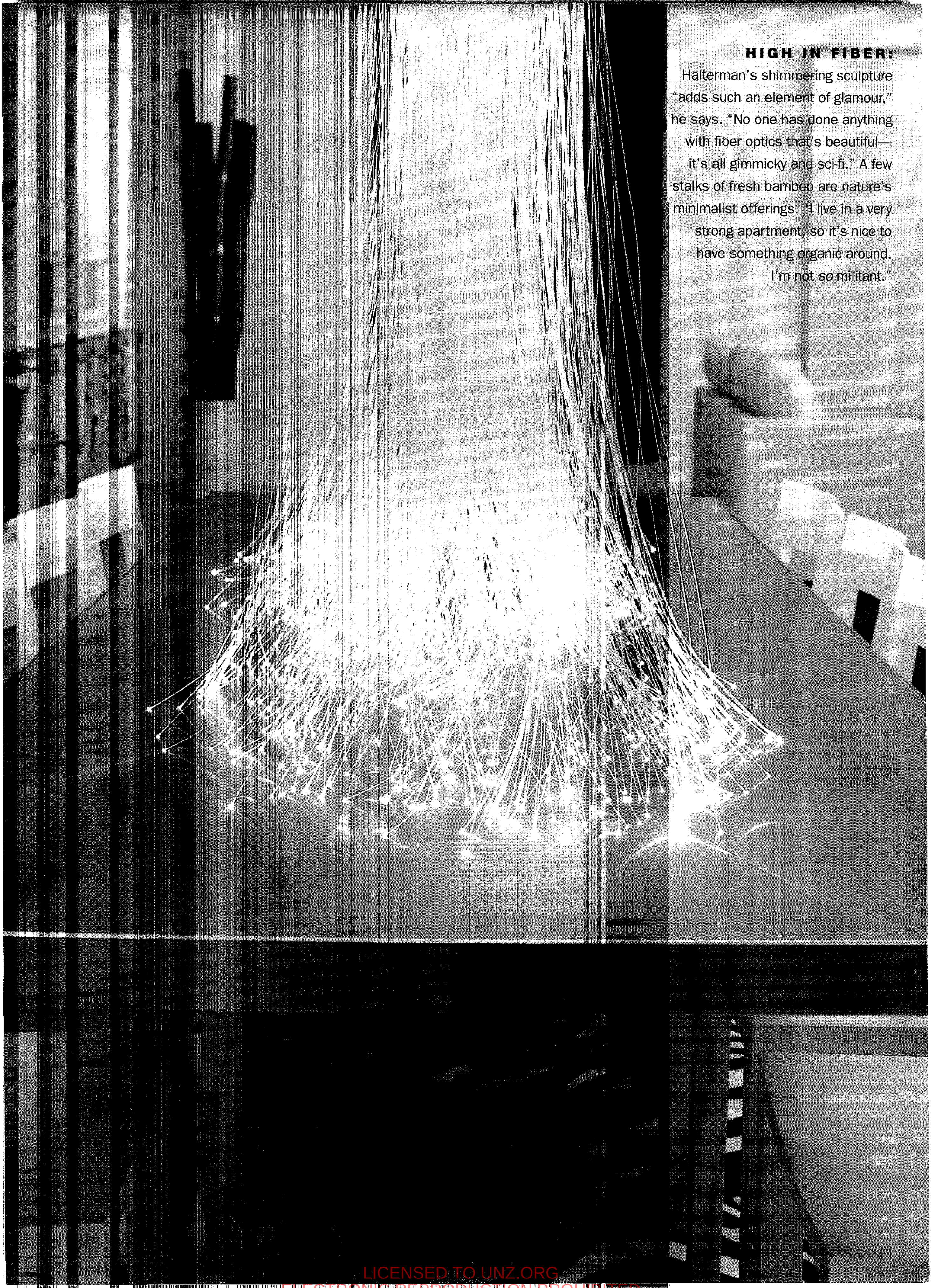


REFLECTED GLORY: Above, the Elsie de Wolfe mantelpiece and a neo-Victorian mirror seem made for each other (they weren't). Right, De Wolfe's antique Chinese-porcelain frog planter proves kitsch was alive and well in 1800. Below, Louis Bofferding, recovering contemporary-art dealer.





HIGH LIGHT: The early-twentieth-century Venetian chandelier has a relatively rare central spiral. "They tend to be very gaudily colored, but this one is very discreet while being mad at the same time," Bofferding says. It will soon be sailing off to its new owner in Chicago, and, says Bofferding, "a chandelier's not so easy to replace." Luckily, a Directoire fixture presented itself on his recent trip to Paris.

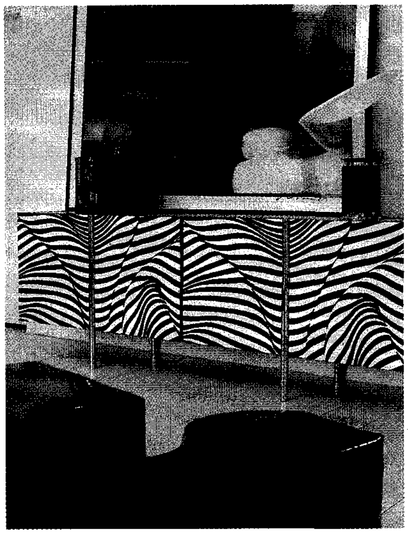


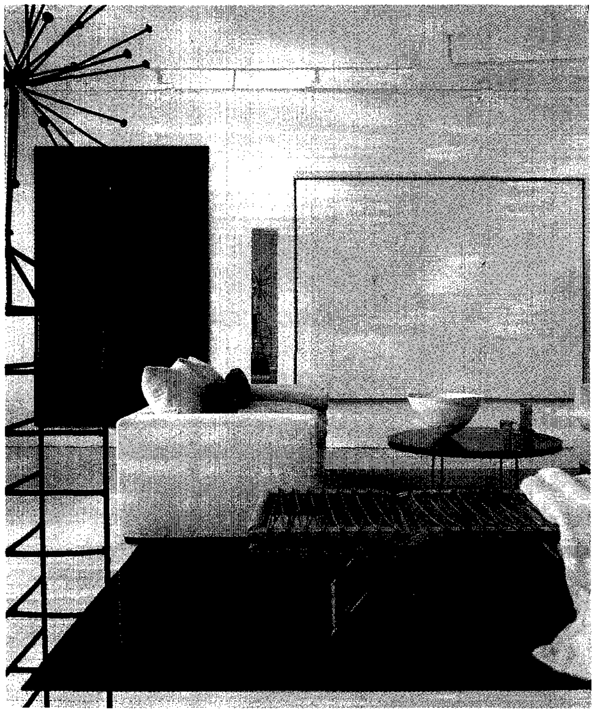
HIGH IN FIBER: Halterman's shimmering sculpture "adds such an element of glamour," he says. "No one has done anything with fiber optics that's beautiful—it's all gimmicky and sci-fi." A few stalks of fresh bamboo are nature's minimalist offerings. "I live in a very strong apartment, so it's nice to have something organic around. I'm not *so* militant."

TROY HALTERMAN TROY

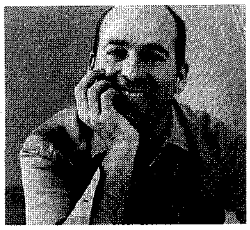
cool awakening

One purple chair is Troy Halterman's sole concession to color in his entire loft. "I've tried red walls, and I've tried a red floor. But I always have to get rid of it the next day," he admits sheepishly. That doesn't mean Halterman doesn't know how to do drama—and all without a velvet swag or an ounce of ormolu in sight. The length of his nine-foot-long dining table is underscored with a cowhide runner printed to look like zebra skin. A sheet of stainless steel is the urban equivalent of a country kitchen's wooden slab; plans are in the works to sell similar made-to-measure tables through his Greene Street store. This one is a canvas for Halterman's own art projects; for parties he dresses it up in linen or velvet, or with brightly colored paper cutouts. A 1,500-strand fiber-optic lighting fixture, also of his own design, rains down from the ceiling. "It's usually the whole topic of conversation," Halterman says. A black oil slick of Dexotex slices his living room out of the open-plan loft, a Constructivist foil to Halterman's huge, white Cy Twombly. "The painting was the first piece in the apartment," he says. "Everything came afterwards to give focus to that." But forget using Mop 'n Glo on the virtual rug—Halterman repaints it often for maximum shine.





ANGLE-HEADED HIPSTER: Above, that must be some TV Halterman keeps in this nine-foot-long Wogg cabinet. Holmegaard vases hold down one end, an Achille Castiglioni glass lamp, the other. "No two Holmegaard vases are exactly the same color," says Halterman, top right, "so when you get a whole schmear of them together, it's like a non-color." The patent-leather couches are his guests' favorite place to flop. Left, Halterman found the wire tree in Los Angeles; he tells himself it's the work of a starving art student. The Hermès chaise can be adjusted like a beach chair.



Inspiring spaces
Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House or anything by Billy Baldwin. The new Gucci store in London by Bill Sofield. Oscar Niemeyer's buildings in Brazil's capital city, Brasília.

Can't bear to part with
Everything Plexiglas.

Furniture of today that's a classic of tomorrow
A Maarten Van Severen chaise.

What's tired?
Anything overstuffed.

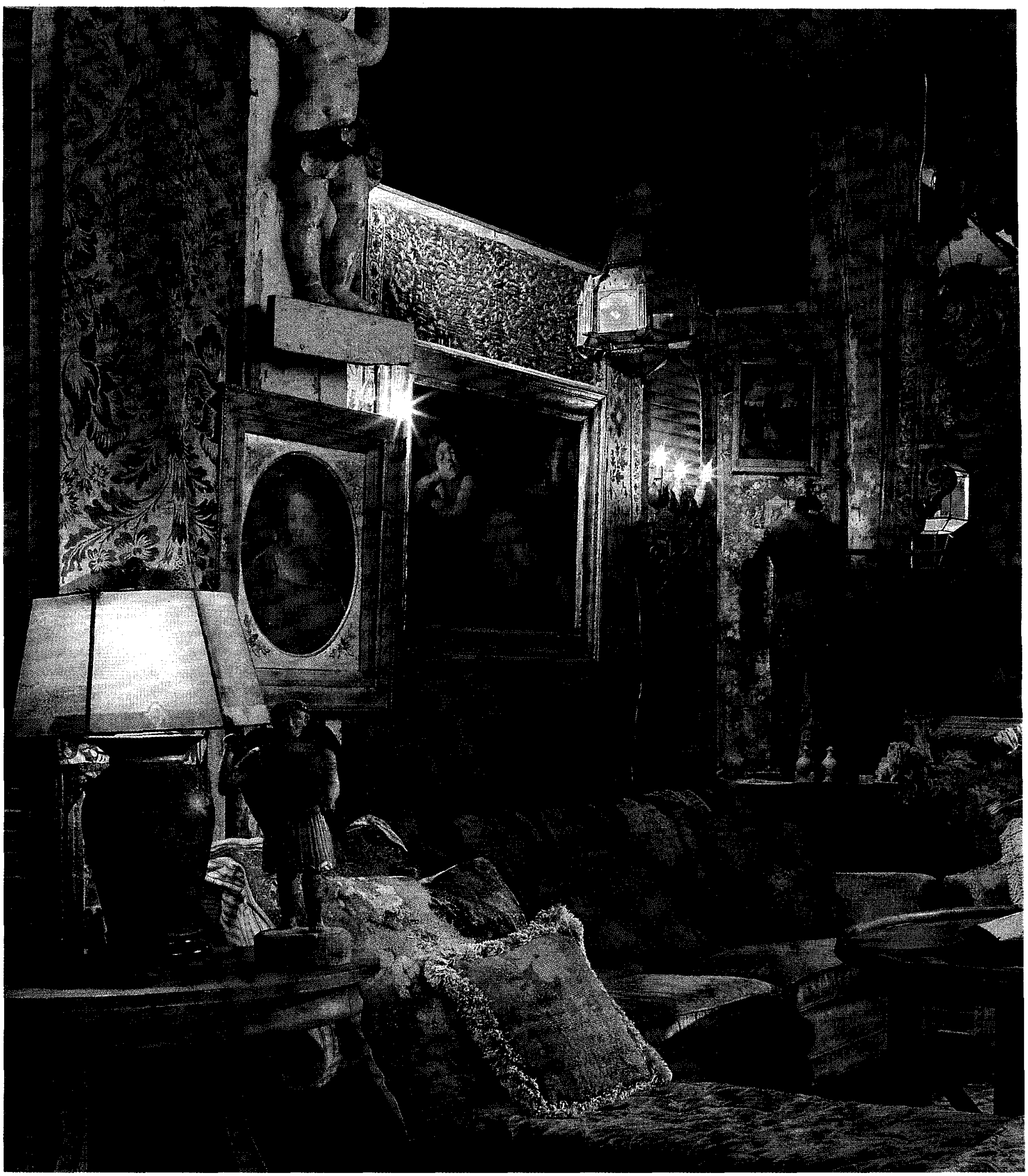
The most expensive (but worth it) thing he ever bought for the apartment
A chinchilla-covered ottoman. "Chinchilla is the softest fur there is. It's a great place to curl up and read a book."

Favorite low-budget shop
Master Restaurant Equipment for dishes, plastic garbage bins, cooking utensils, industrial kitchen appliances, and stainless-steel bowls.

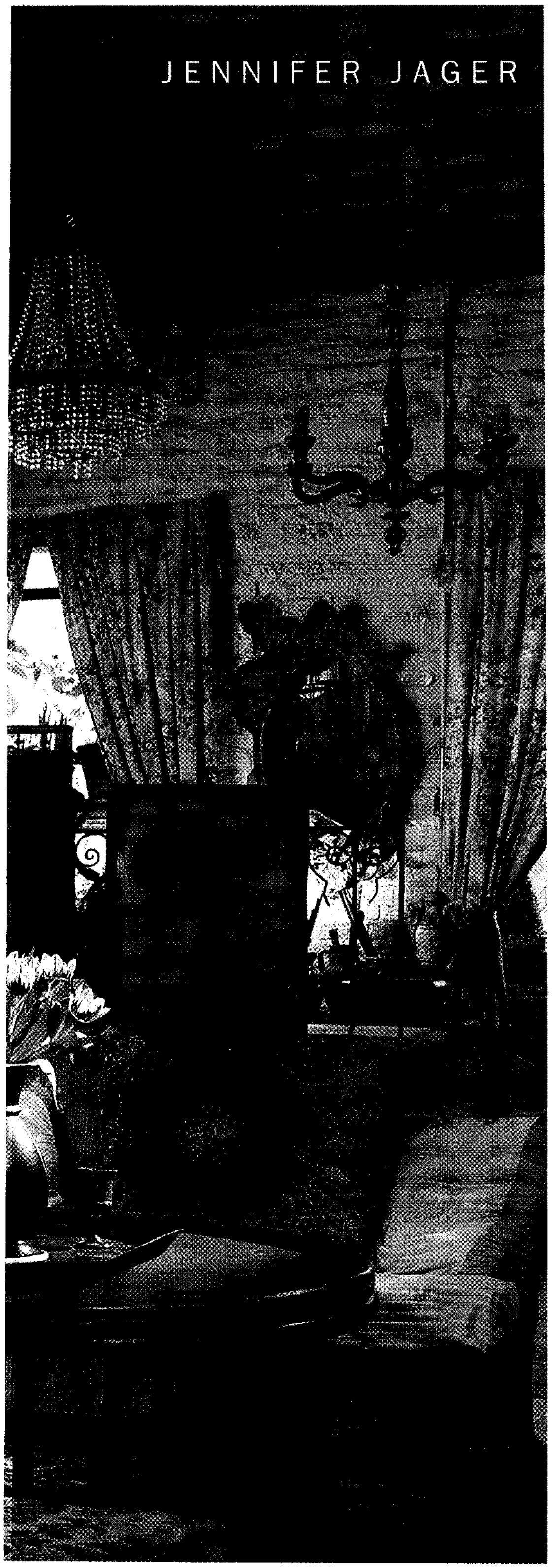
Inspiration for own home
The James Bond movie *On Her Majesty's Secret Service.*

Best catalogues
Garnet Hill for sheets and Sweet's Group, which sells things usually used in factories like stainless-steel drums, corrugated-paper boxes, and glass beakers.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW BORDWIN



PUTTI IN HER HANDS: What unattributed masterpieces lurk on these walls? A Tibetan rug strategically tossed over the back of a green velvet couch transforms it into something more magnificent. When Jennifer Jager bought the chaise, it was covered in potato-sack burlap; it has since been reupholstered, but only she remembers what lies at the very bottom of the thousand-fabric heap.



JENNIFER JAGER GRAY GARDENS

good and plenty

You won't see Jennifer Jager genuflecting to period furniture, even if she *is* an antiques dealer. "Much of my own is from flea markets. What I like is art and textiles. Furniture holds people and . . . those other things." Her South Street Seaport loft—carved out of an old sausage factory—is a window on this more-is-more mind-set. Every surface has been blanketed, sometimes twice, with paintings, fabrics, or pillows. Multiple chandeliers hang from sturdy timbers intent on shedding chips of paint. "I think the apartment is darkly romantic," Jager says. "I like its warm atmosphere. You can nestle into all of the pillows." Jager sometimes makes her own, patching mattress ticking together with eighteenth-century metallic weaves, for example, adding—always adding—more strata. Her SoHo store, Gray Gardens, is steeped in the same sort of decaying grandeur. Perhaps the most macabre thing Jager owns is a naked eighteenth-century Jesus, or *niño,* wearing a red velvet cape. "It came from a woman whose son had died," Jager explains. "She dressed it up and referred to it as her child. When she got over grieving, she sold it." Which may sum up the transitory, irrational attachments that we all have—antiques dealers especially—to inanimate objects.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW BORDWIN

BE IT EVER SO JUMBLED: Souvenir clogs from the early twentieth century are elaborately painted inside and out and remind Jager of her many trips to Holland. The wire basket is from a public pool's locker room in Atlanta. "I bought a ton of them, which I *was* planning to sell, and wound up using them all for mail, paint, and vitamins," says Jager.

Inspiring spaces
The Orientalist salons of Paris.

Bought for the shop but decided to keep
"Too many things." A gorgeous pair of seventeenth-century Italian carved wall brackets: "Once I put them up on my beam, the beam looked so good, the brackets had to stay."

Miss anything that got sold?
A seventeenth-century Dutch still life of fruits and flowers, beautifully painted but in a ruined state.

Most extravagant piece that came through the store
An eighteenth-century painted German *kas* (a big wardrobe)—sold to a famous actor and his now-ex-partner. "I don't know who got the *kas*."

First great piece of furniture she bought
"When I was 14 or 15, I purchased a very fine Victorian wicker settee at a shop on Avenue A."

Biggest mistake purchase
"Probably the last one."

What dresses up an old piece of furniture?
Either drape it with an old, beautiful fabric or re-cover it in white duck.

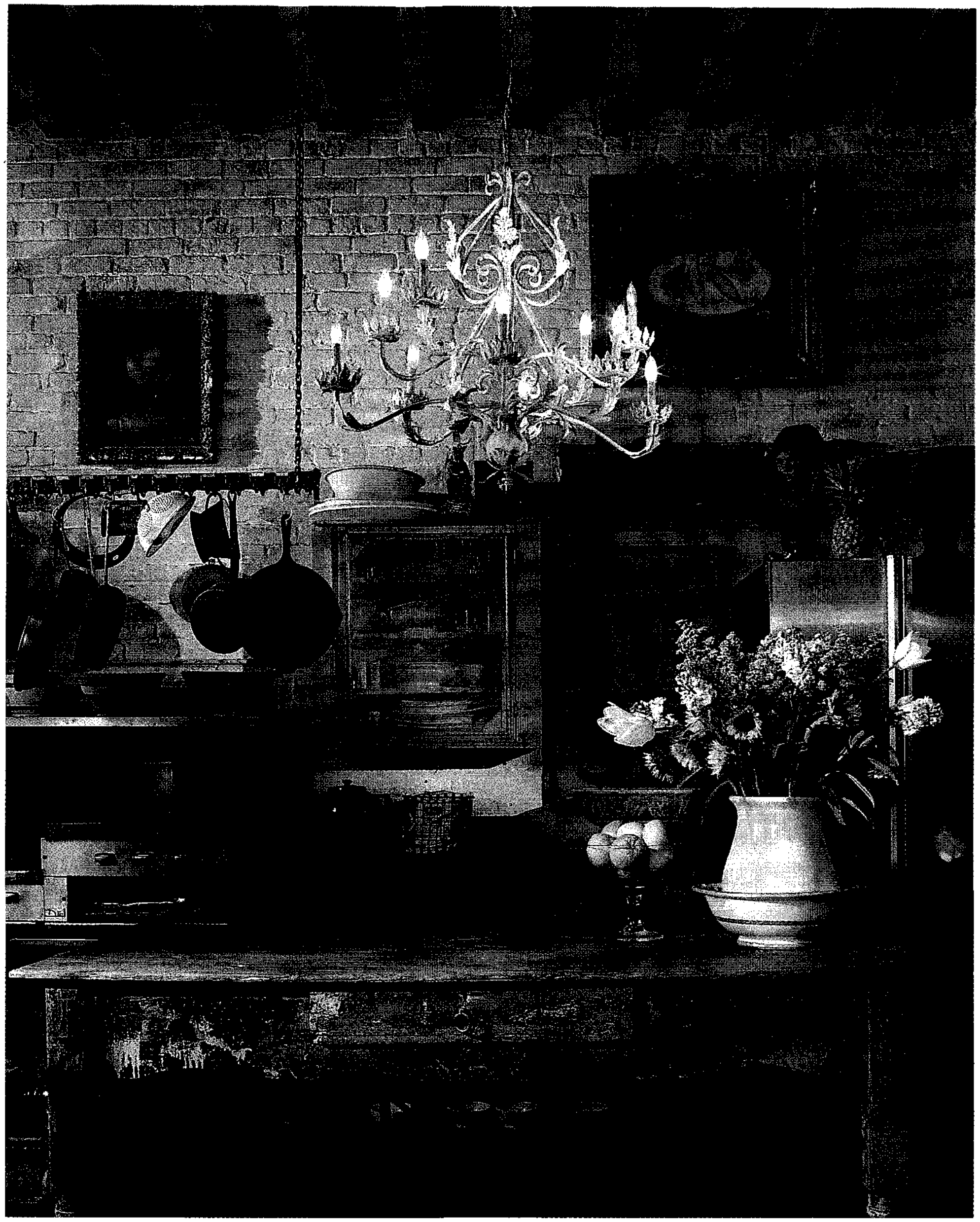
Favorite upholstery fabric
"In the shop, we use white muslin because it shows the lines of the pieces."

The most timeless furniture
Italian neoclassical.

What's tired?
Undistinguished American furniture, like clunky cupboards; stripped steel hospital furniture.

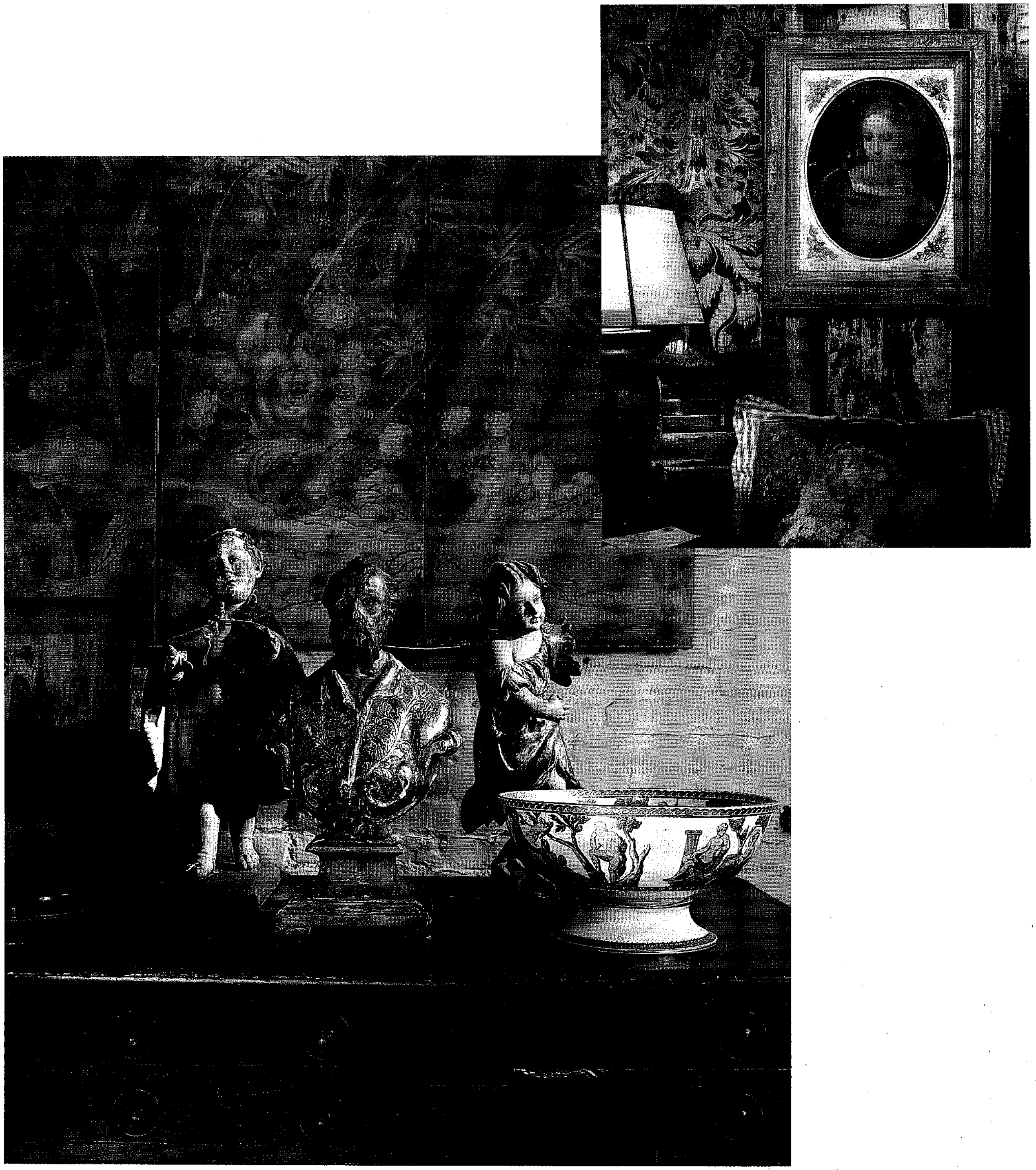
What's ugly?
"Poorly designed and made fifties and sixties stuff."

If she could, she'd buy
A Rembrandt self-portrait, or maybe a small Raphael.



MRS. PEEL: The provenance of the chandelier is Atlantic City. "There were 200 of them," Jager recalls. "I bought four and sold three. I generally don't like that painted metal, but this had a peely patina. It was left out in some junkyard for a while." The screen-door pie safe is a vestige of Jager's days as an Americana dealer. "Some of the stuff that was left over, I used in my apartment," says Jager. Right, Jennifer Jager, outside her loft.

HEADS COUNT: Right, "That's my Raphael," says Jager. "In quotes, mind you. I got that years ago in Maine for $35." She's pretty sure the painting is a seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy; the Raphaelite blue was added later. Below, the carved-wood *niño,* terra-cotta nobleman, and a rather baroque-looking John the Baptist make a wacky trio atop a pattern-maker's cabinet.



JOHN EATON GEOMANCY

mergers and acquisitions

Can't find enough
"Lamps—in my shop, after a weekend of sales, I'm often left in the dark."

Inspiring spaces
The Madeleine Castaing shop on Paris's Rue Bonaparte—"a museum of great ideas." Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion. Stephen Sills and James Huniford's home in Bedford.

Bought for the shop but decided to keep
Faience porcelain plates (one is pictured at right) from Paris's Clignancourt flea market.

Miss anything that got sold?
A nineteenth-century Japanese lantern. "It was the first really expensive lantern I ever purchased. I just know it was something totally, totally irreplaceable. I sold it to a good client, but I always give her a hard time about it when she comes in."

Biggest mistake purchase
A set of painted twentieth-century French chairs that turned out to be fakes.

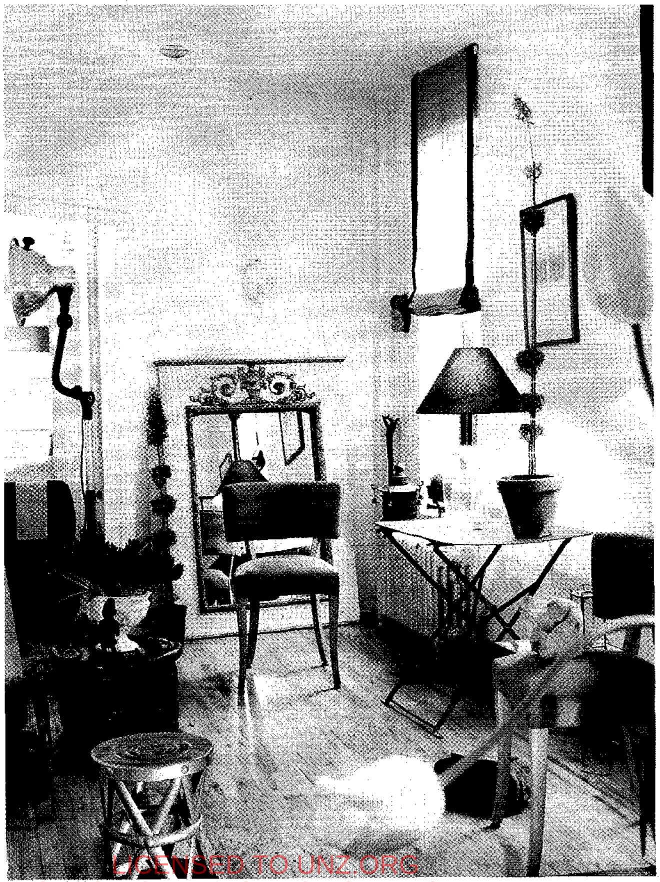
The most timeless furniture
African stools.

What's ugly?
Southwestern stuff.

The greatest furniture designer ever
Jean-Michel Frank.

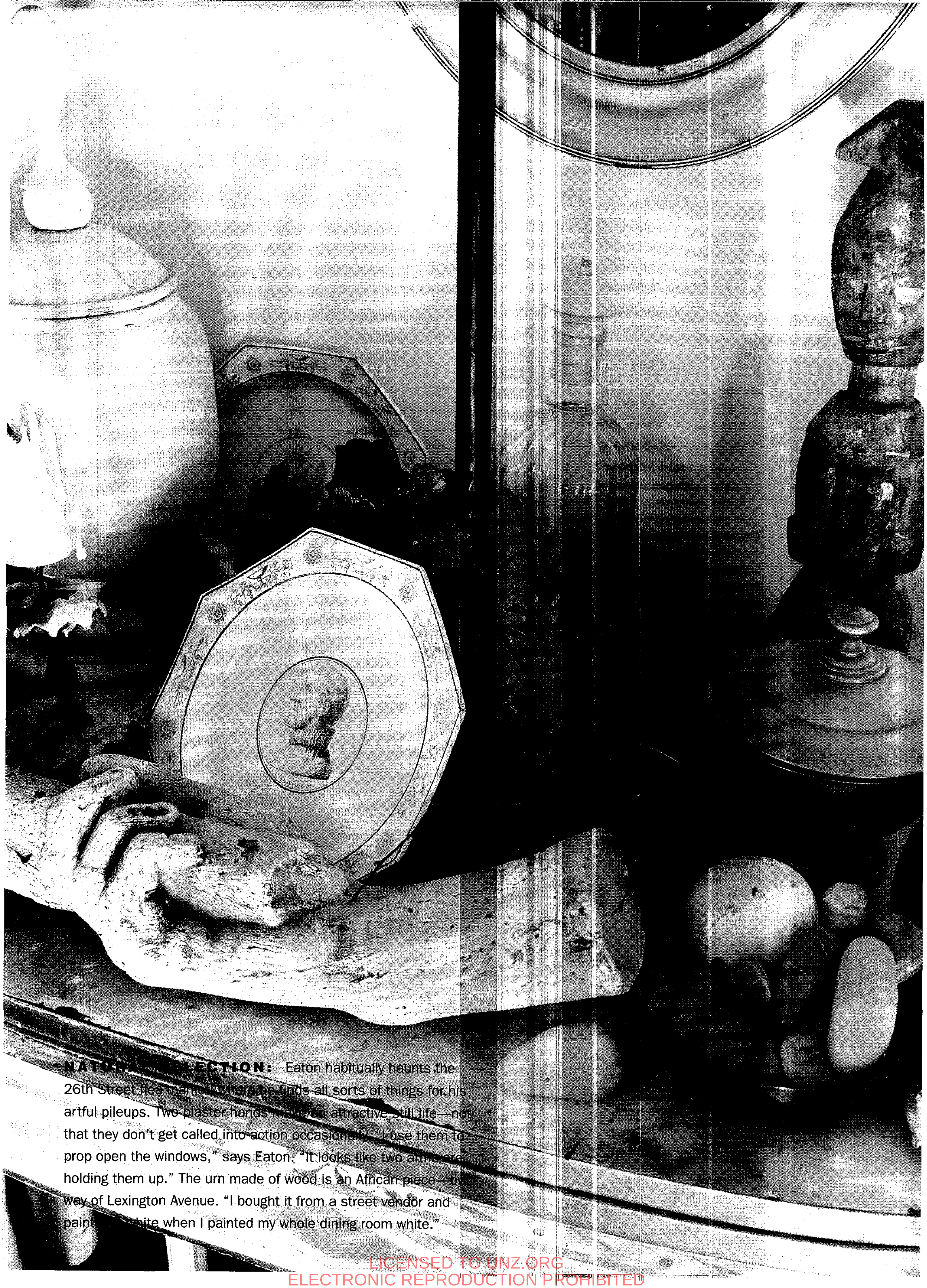
John Eaton's clients (Iman, Lauren Hutton, Brice and Helen Marden) can afford the things he carries at his East Village shop, Geomancy—a nineteenth-century Chinese console, for example. But Eaton couldn't bear to drop $4,000 on a table that would sit in his own Tompkins Square dining room. "I cannot live with something beautiful and important when I know I have to sell it," he says. "My shop is small and really crowded, so the last thing I want to do is go home and look at furniture. I like the emptiness." This credo obviously doesn't extend to arresting knickknacks. Eaton's light-saturated one-bedroom has been loosely packed with flea-market finds and natural flotsam arranged in moldering vignettes. A piece of bark that was gainfully employed as a lampshade easily morphs into a candleholder. A myrtle topiary echoes the rounded form of a Plexiglas lamp on a bistro table. An English ironstone soup tureen makes as good a flower pot as any atop a stool from Cameroon. The things he saves for himself from his around-the-world shopping excursions have their portability in common. There are African masks and stools, plates from dearly departed wedding sets. And then there are the rocks. He has a collection of about 60 he lugged home from Provincetown. They cluster on the tables. They lurk on the floor. Large, flat ones are nifty soap dishes in the bathroom. Says Eaton: "How can you throw away a rock?"

PHOTOGRAPHED BY FERNANDO BENGOECHEA



COLLECTOR'S ITEMS: John Eaton, upper left, and his living room, left. Interior designer Michael Formica evidently liked this gold stool, too; several just like it appeared in an apartment he did that was shot by *Elle Decor.* (Eaton discovered his in a Maine antiques store.) And an African dealer sold him the black stool. "I can't have a big sofa in my home," says Eaton. "My mind changes so frequently."

Portrait by Michael Lisnet.

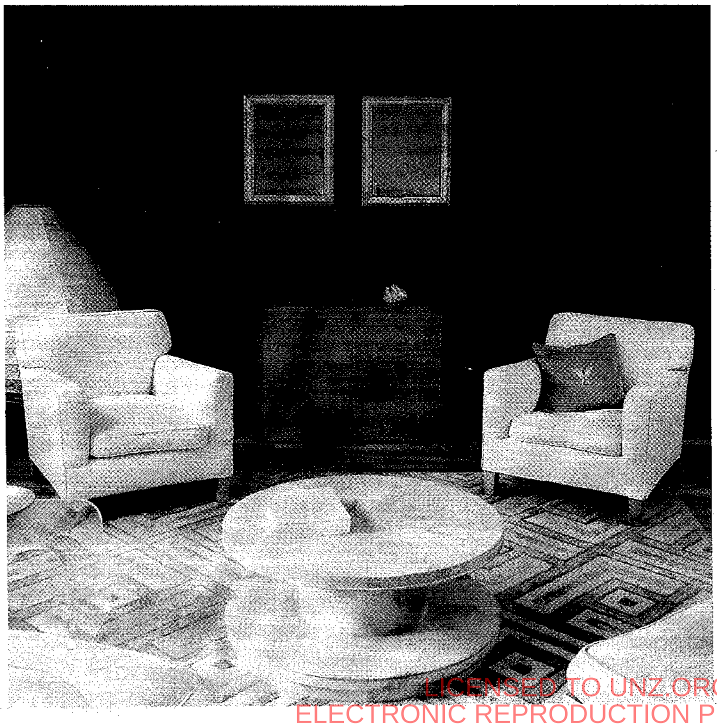


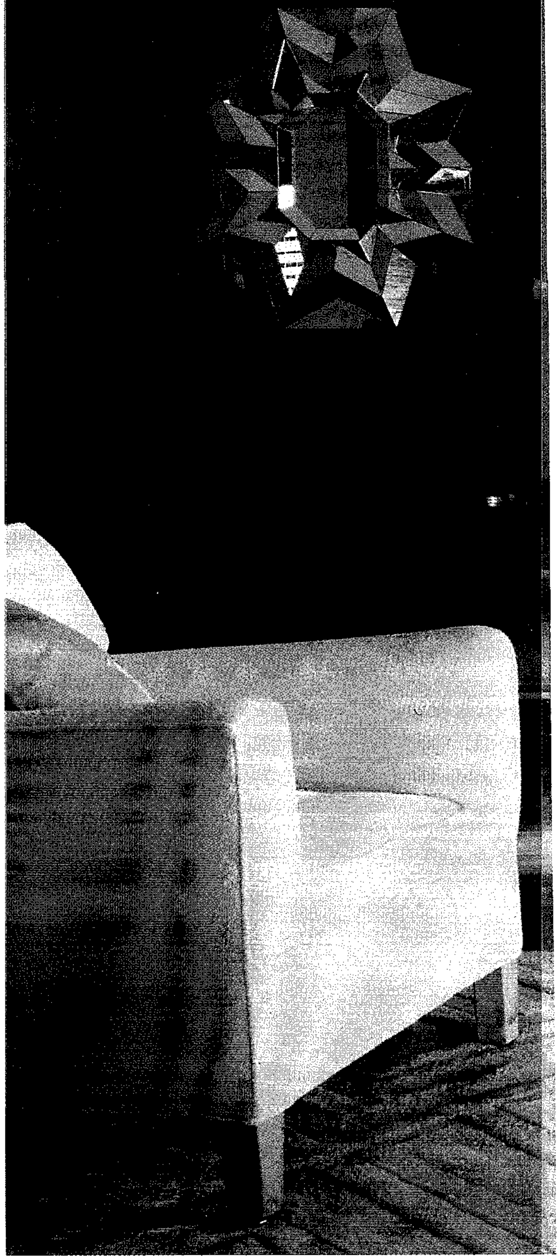
NATURAL SELECTION: Eaton habitually haunts the 26th Street flea market, where he finds all sorts of things for his artful pileups. Two plaster hands make an attractive still life—not that they don't get called into action occasionally. "I use them to prop open the windows," says Eaton. "It looks like two arms are holding them up." The urn made of wood is an African piece—by way of Lexington Avenue. "I bought it from a street vendor and painted it white when I painted my whole dining room white."

LIZ O'BRIEN FORTY ONE

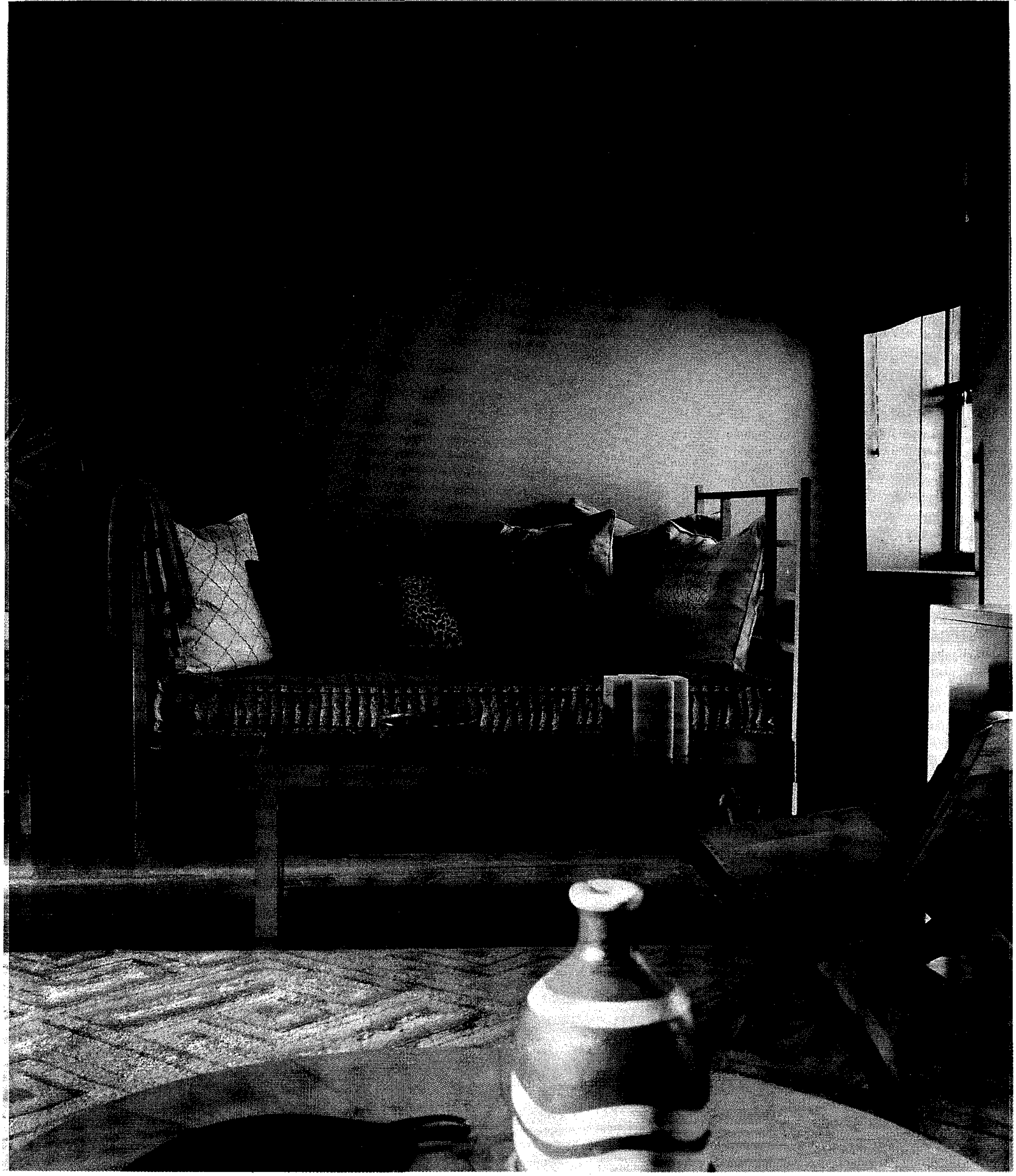
miss scarlet

At her SoHo shop, Forty One, Liz O'Brien sells the sort of swank that will probably never go out of style: Chairs from the mansions of men whose names are still affixed to Hollywood studios. Pagoda lamps by Tony Duquette. Screens from *The King and I*. "I like theatrical fantasy furniture," says O'Brien, whose taste for raunchy reds is informed by Yves Saint Laurent's exuberant palette. The forties and fifties were glory days for custom furniture, and so it goes without saying that some of these pieces—designed by the likes of T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings, Samuel Marx, and Tommi Parzinger—might have wandered off the lot and into her loft above the shop. • Allowing these armchairs to drift in a sea of shabby-chic slipcovers and bleached-out sisal would have been a washout. O'Brien enlisted interior designer Muriel Brandolini—no cowardly colorist she—to thrust these prize pieces into bold relief. So each room has been painted a different throbbing hue. The living room is a hardy tomato, the dining room a high-Fahrenheit fuschia. • A pair of Billy Haines chairs are covered in a nubbly pale-pink silk and bear the initials of Louis B. Mayer's daughter—Edie Goetz—discreetly embroidered on the backs of the cushions (just as they would have been inside her sable wrap). Among Haines's clients were Edie Goetz's husband, William—who headed up 20th Century Fox—and Jack Warner. "People kept this furniture for decades without changing a thing," O'Brien says. And so, no doubt, will she.





WHITE WATCHERS: Left, the ceramic deer's head is by Jean René Gauguin (thought to be the painter's grandson) and came from Alan Moss. "The whole time I worked for Alan, no one ever bought it," says O'Brien, who nevertheless formed an attachment. Architect Samuel Marx crafted the paired mirrors, coffee table, and armchairs against the wall. A Noguchi lamp skulks in the corner.



ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATO: Above, a splash of Janovic Plaza paint plays well with the coral-and-jade Clarence House fabric on a Tommi Parzinger daybed. O'Brien's lacquer coffee table has seen better days, but it comes with a Robsjohn-Gibbings pedigree. The carpet is a creamy vintage V'Soske.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY FERNANDO BENGOECHEA

Inspiring space
Matisse's red studio.

Wishes she lived in
Audrey Hepburn's empty Paris apartment in the movie *Charade*. "The emptiness seemed very decadent. And I always have too many things."

Miss anything that got sold?
An ebony-and-eggshell letter opener by Alexandre Noll.

Biggest mistake purchase
"My biggest mistakes were things I didn't buy. Definitely don't look back—that's the dealer mentality."

Bought for the shop but decided to keep
A Tommi Parzinger walnut daybed she uses as a sofa.

Furniture of today that's a classic of tomorrow
Chris Lehrecke's custom designs.

The most expensive (but worth it) thing she bought for her apartment
A vintage wool V'Soske carpet.

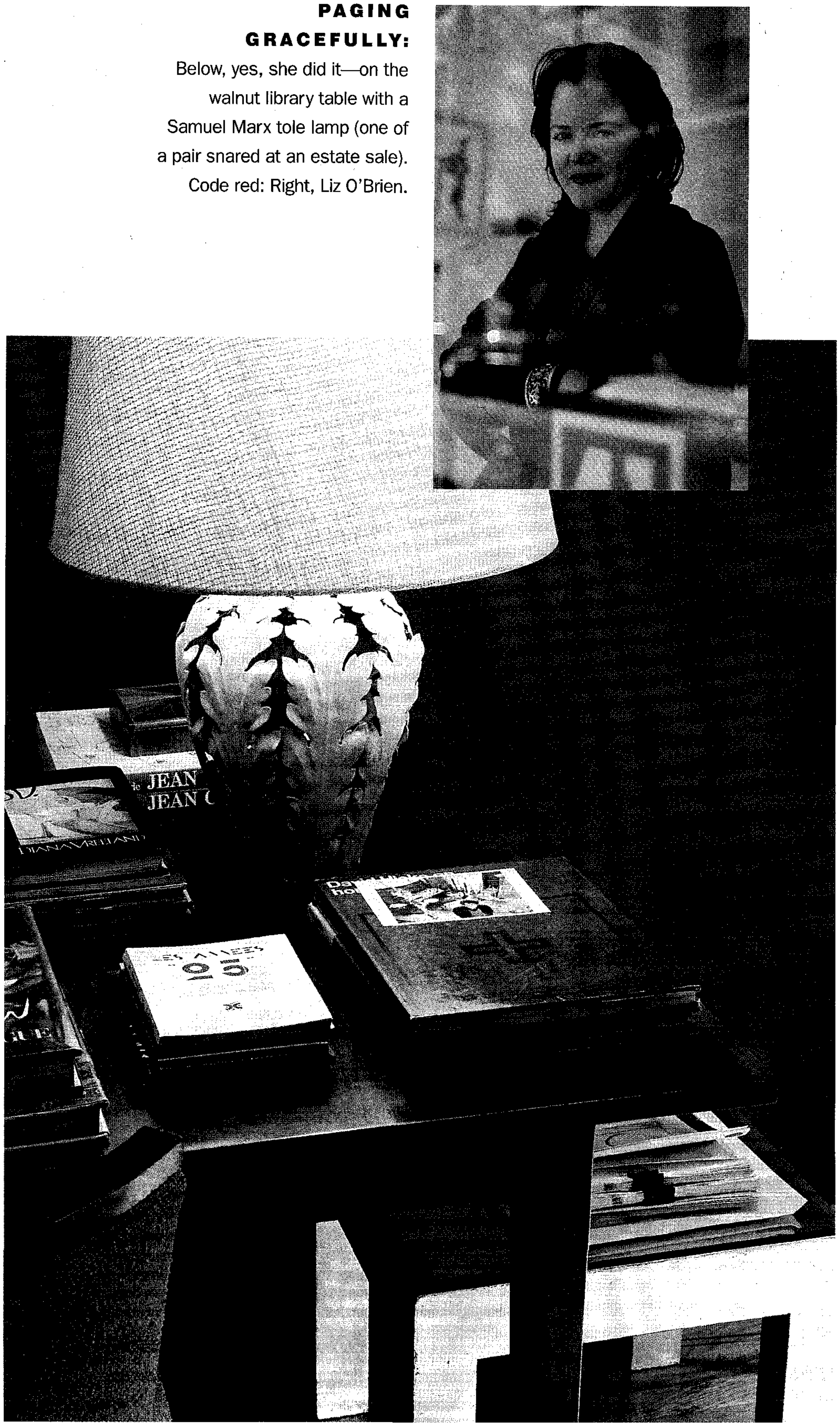
What never works
Low-budget minimalism. "A successful minimalist interior is one of the hardest, most expensive things to do. People don't even realize that."

Most expensive thing she sells
A $27,500 Samuel Marx desk.

Favorite low-budget shop
"Housing Works Thrift Shop, where I've found great books, Parsons tables, and lamps."

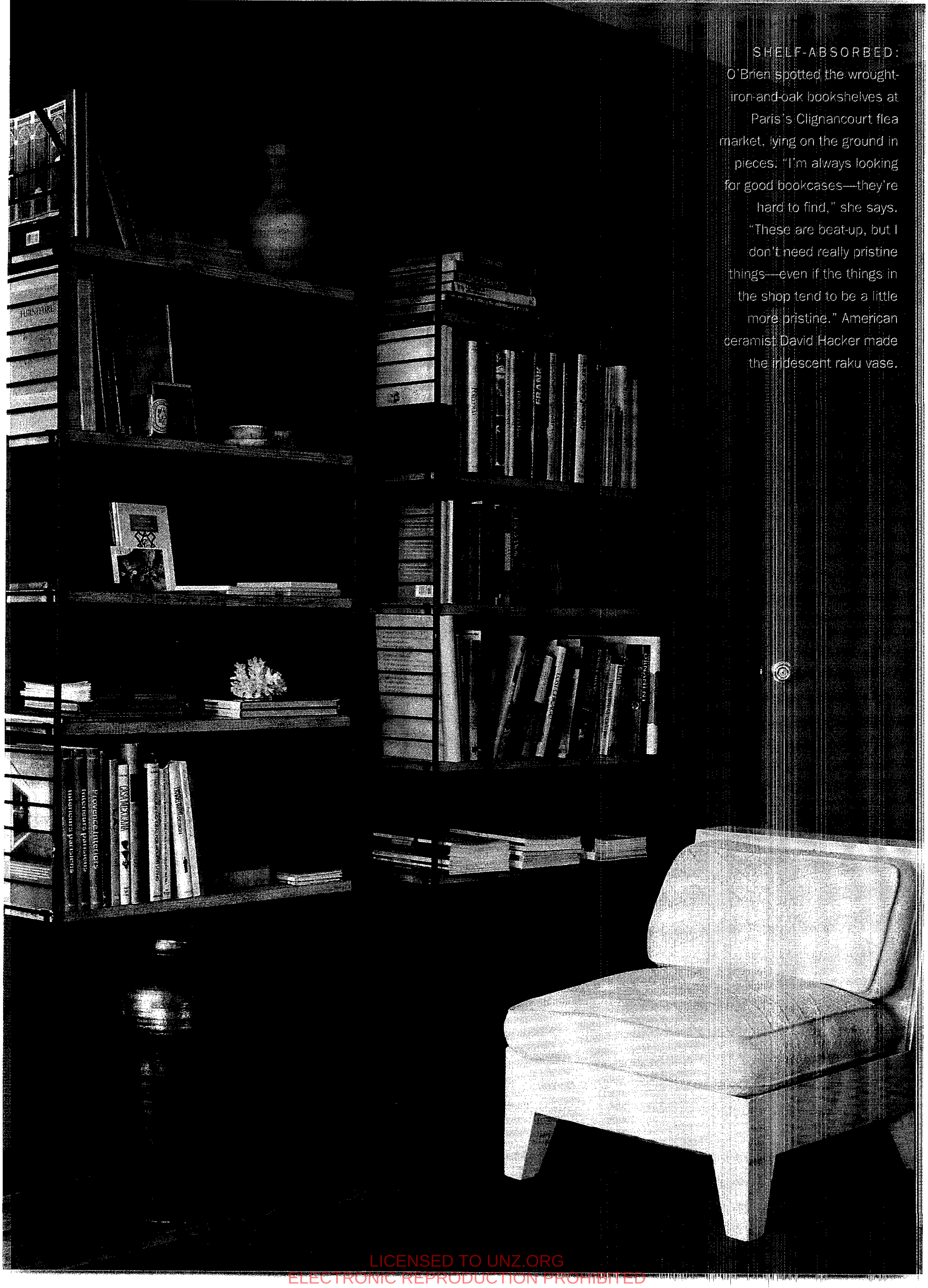
The greatest furniture designers ever
The Shakers.

Can't live without
My library.



PAGING GRACEFULLY: Below, yes, she did it—on the walnut library table with a Samuel Marx tole lamp (one of a pair snared at an estate sale). Code red: Right, Liz O'Brien.

Portrait by Michael Lisnet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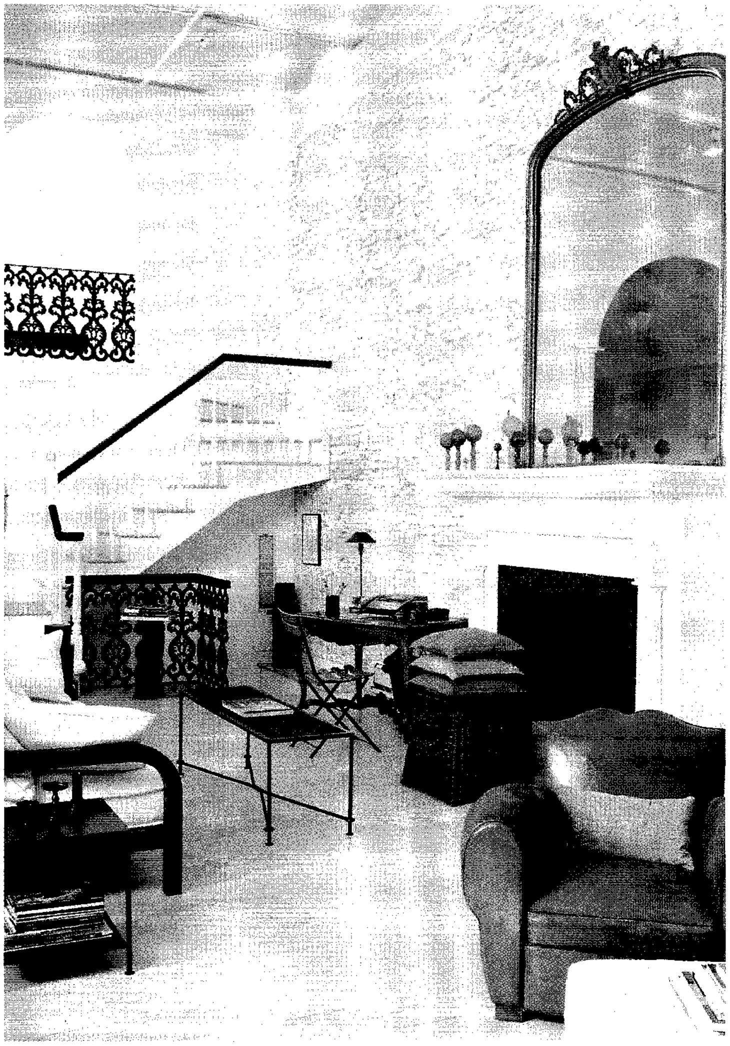
SHELF-ABSORBED: O'Brien spotted the wrought-iron-and-oak bookshelves at Paris's Clignancourt flea market, lying on the ground in pieces. "I'm always looking for good bookcases—they're hard to find," she says. "These are beat-up, but I don't need really pristine things—even if the things in the shop tend to be a little more pristine." American ceramist David Hacker made the iridescent raku vase.

LAURENCE KRIEGEL

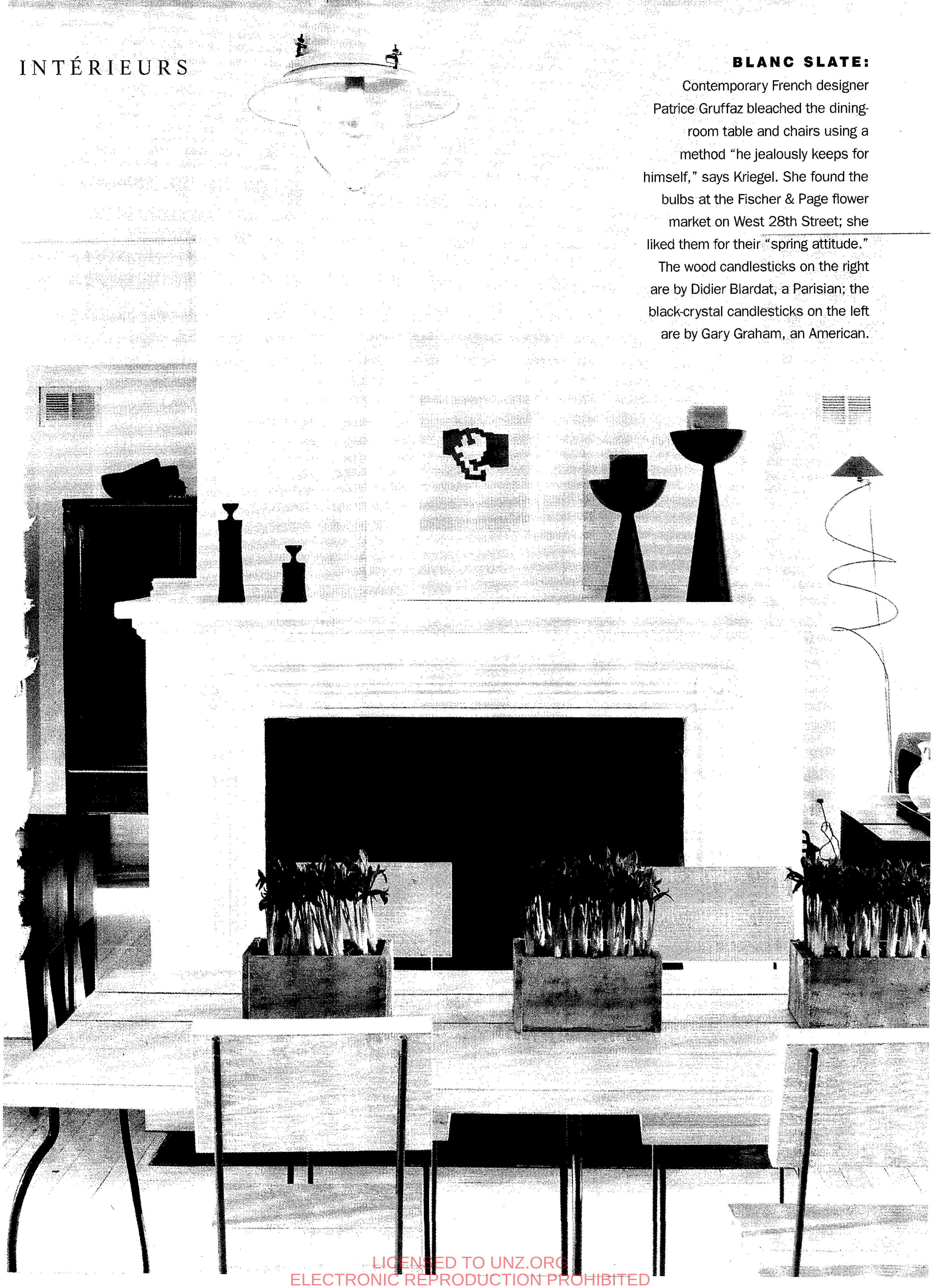
white house insider



Three thousand square feet, no windows. Sounds like a real-estate-listings joke, doesn't it? But Laurence Kriegel's airy, light-filled loft, a ground-floor triplex in the Village, somehow fits the description. A massive skylight, wall-to-wall white, and judiciously placed mirrors let the sun shine in. The mirrors and whitewash were there when she moved in, but it took Kriegel to sparingly add purple irises in pine crates, oxidized-metal occasional tables, and leather club chairs from the South of France—which sell out the moment they hit the floor of her Wooster Street shop, Intérieurs. "It's much more interesting and far less risky to come up with colorful accessories, a simple lamp with a touch of color in the shade," she says. "If you get bored, it's easier to throw out a cushion than repaint." On her mantel are precisely placed Brancusi-esque candlesticks; Kriegel has started making chunky paraffin candles in shades from stone to ebony (also for sale at Intérieurs). What accounts for these stage-set rooms? The Brittany-born shop owner once worked as a stylist—one of her last gigs was *Leaving Las Vegas.* "I'm kind of a perfectionist. I get rigid about how I want things," she admits. "My kids [ages 7 and 9] don't like to play in the living room because they know I have it the way I want it. But they have their own paradise downstairs." The only thing in the loft that currently displeases her is a pair of ten-year-old Shabby Chic chairs that no longer live up to the billing. She plans to replace them with something from her new line of furniture, now going into production. That *other* designer of fabulous contemporary Franco-furniture, Christian Liaigre, will probably be upset, she says, laughing, "but there's a place for competition."

IT'S ALL DONE WITH MIRRORS: Above: Kriegel thinks this one is eighteenth-century. The wicker stool is her own design. As for the twenties club chair, "It's the original leather—it's a little bit damaged, but I like the sense that things have a history," she says. On the mantelpiece is her ever-mushrooming collection of turned wood, which she calls "bilboquets."

PHOTOGRAPHED BY FERNANDO BENGOECHEA



BLANC SLATE: Contemporary French designer Patrice Gruffaz bleached the dining-room table and chairs using a method "he jealously keeps for himself," says Kriegel. She found the bulbs at the Fischer & Page flower market on West 28th Street; she liked them for their "spring attitude." The wood candlesticks on the right are by Didier Blardat, a Parisian; the black-crystal candlesticks on the left are by Gary Graham, an American.

How often she redecorates
Every week or every month—"it varies by the moon, how stable I feel in my life."

Inspiring spaces
Those pictured in French decorating magazines like *Côte Sud, Côte Ouest, Marie-Claire Maison, Maison Française.* Big mansions in the South of France with "pigmented-plaster walls, colorful and warm."

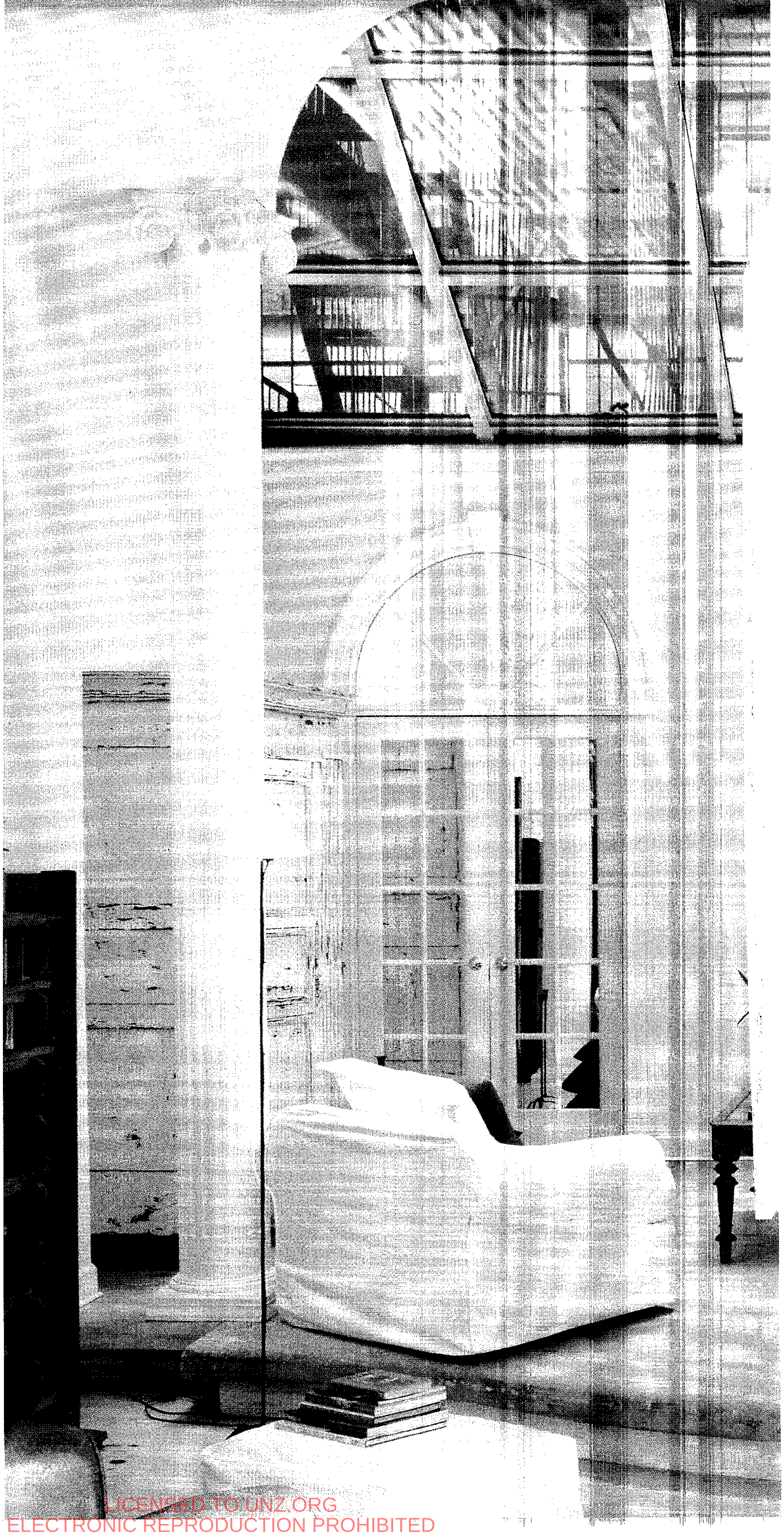
Can't find enough of
The right table, "probably because I insist on having furniture that is an object of beauty before it is an object of necessity."

Miss anything that got sold?
A cement heron made by an old man in the South of France.

First great piece of furniture she owned
"The piano was originally in the apartment, and I asked the lady if I could buy it. She said she would be embarrassed to sell it to me because it basically doesn't work. That's the kind of thing that doesn't scare me. The object by itself is beautiful."

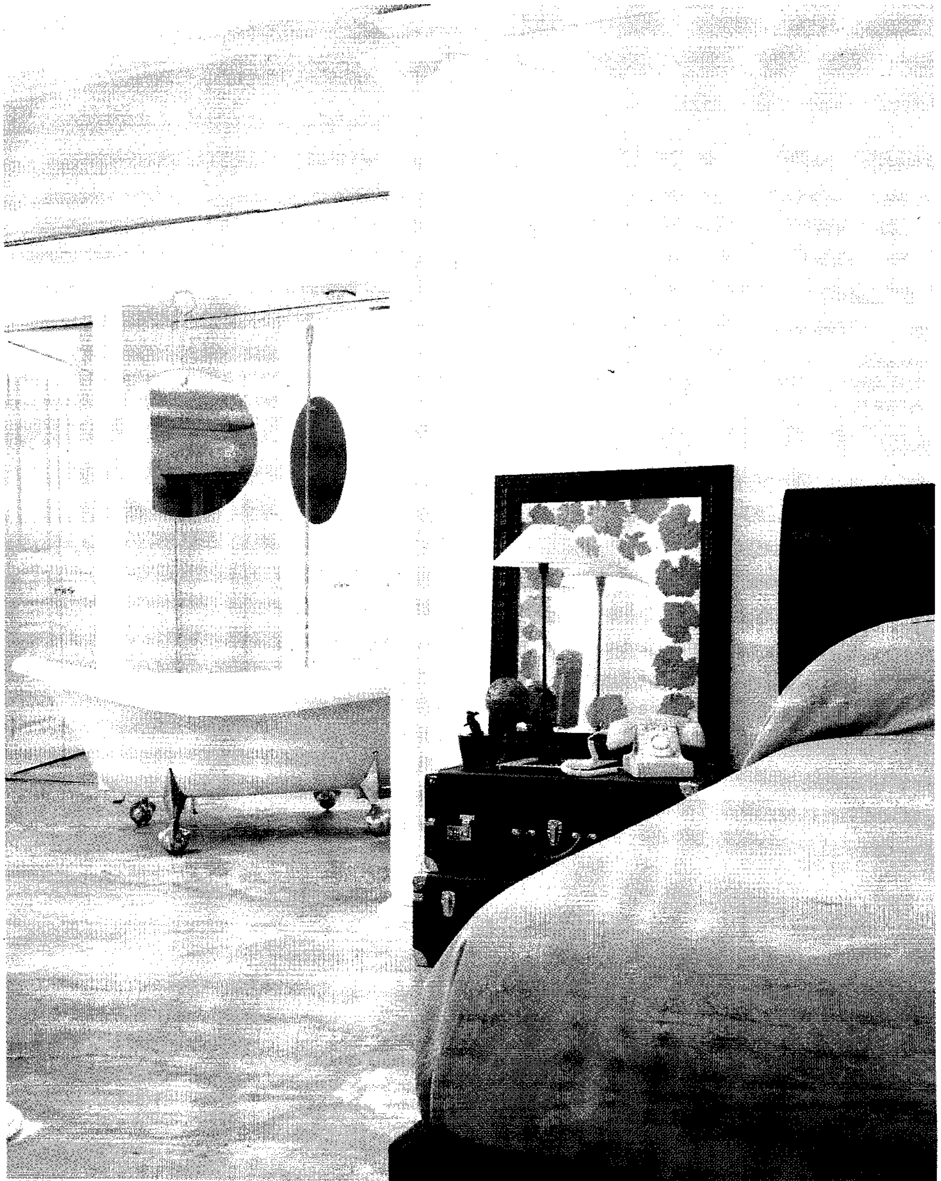
Favorite low-budget shops
Flea markets in Provence, especially L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue and St. Rémy. Shì on Elizabeth Street for ashtrays, candles, and vases.

The greatest furniture designer ever
Christian Liaigre.



STEP RIGHT UP: The platform floor is cement and effectively creates *two* living rooms. Kriegel found the Indonesian bamboo coffee table a long time ago in France. "What I like most about it is the size. It's very *large*—six or eight feet," she says. "I love to sit on tables. I collect chairs for the design, but I usually sit on coffee tables or on the floor." Which explains that Chinese-silk cushion.

IT'S A WHITEWASH: Right, there's no door on the master-bedroom's bathroom; "it's a small space and we wanted to keep this a loft," Kriegel says. The tub is a reproduction of an eighteenth-century cast-iron design, and designer Patrice Gruffaz suspended the mirror from a tiny hook. Kriegel's bedside "table" is a pair of Bottega suitcases. "They were a teasing present from my ex-husband, who thought I didn't know how to pack," she says. But the trunks are too heavy to carry. Real leaves are permanently glued to her Hilton McConnico mirror. Below, Kriegel relaxes on a twin-size oak day bed—"a typical Mediterranean sofa"—with linen dragonfly cushions from Lesage like those she sells in the shop. "I always take some for me," says Kriegel. "Lucky me."

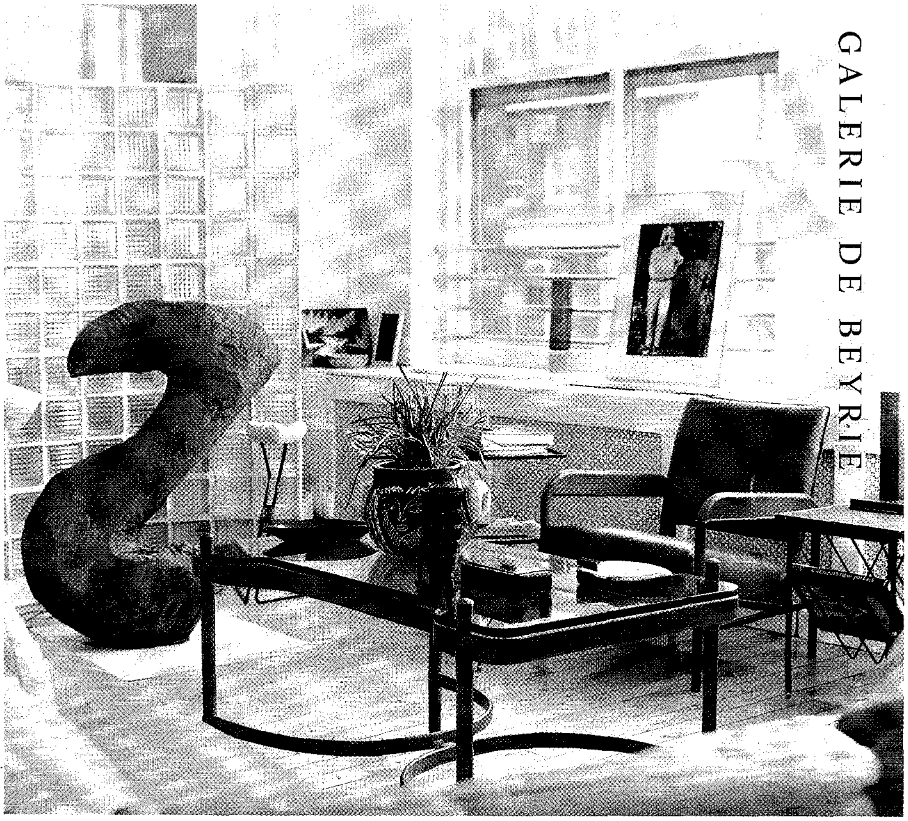


BEYOND THE PALE: Opposite, a zinc finial that once crowned a nineteenth-century building is an almost Moorish obelisk. That plaster bust isn't Napoleon; it's French comic actor Fernandel. The piano, never in tune, is played by her 9-year-old son. "I bought it for the shape because I don't like contemporary pianos," says Kriegel. A mountain bike has found a permanent home in her living room: "I probably look at it more than I ride it," Kriegel admits.

coffee table, please

OME DESIGN '98

The old cliché is that the owners live above the shop. Stéphane and Catherine de Beyrie have the good fortune to live *in* one, alongside a superlative collection of forties and fifties French furniture. At the Galerie de Beyrie, Stéphane and Catherine eat Ceci-Cela croissants and drink champagne, seated on $16,000 worth of chairs by Jean Royère at their $12,000 oak Prouvé dining table. It's the quintessential home office (happily located on the third floor of 393 West Broadway; otherwise, all SoHo would be window-shopping their very lives). But isn't it scary, living cheek-by-jowl with the merchandise? What if somebody drops a Noll pitcher? Or, God forbid, knocks over a Barovier lamp? "We're not at all afraid of hurting things," says Catherine. Or mixing periods. "Besides, young collectors can see how to live with them—not be so careful. It's very interesting for people. It's not like a museum. It's a very living place." • The de Beyries had a similar setup when they started out in Paris, in St. Germain de Près, forging connections with the daughters of furniture designers Alexandre Noll and Jean Prouvé. But they fled a year and a half ago, says Stéphane, because "Americans are always interested in new things more quickly than the French." Here's proof: Architect Peter Marino is already a member of the frequent-buyers' club.



EVERYTHING MUST GO: Opposite, Hermés classics include the Kelly bag and Jacques Adnet furniture. The black leather dining table and chairs are nice examples of his "fifties work." "The chairs are actually very comfortable," Catherine de Beyrie insists. The bookcase is Perriand; the cabinet, Prouvé. This page, Alexandre Noll's curvaceous sculpture once stood in his garden. Adnet created the leather chair for the cruise ship *Le France*. More French all-star merch: an Adnet coffee table and a vase by Picault.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL MUNDY

STÉPHANE AND CATHERINE DE BEYRIE GALERIE DE BEYRIE

How long has this place looked this way?
One week.

Can't get their hands on enough
Jacques Adnet, Georges Jouve, Le Corbusier, Serge Mouille, Alexandre Noll, French designers of the forties and fifties.

Inspiring spaces
Le Corbusier's Villa Savoie; Chareau's Maison de Verre.

Miss anything that got sold?
A huge black Jouve ceramic vase with a green sun on it.

Can't bear to part with
A rare chrome, glass, and wood clock by Adnet and a Noll ebony "magnum-of-champagne bar" ("It came from the family, and it's not for sale," says Catherine).

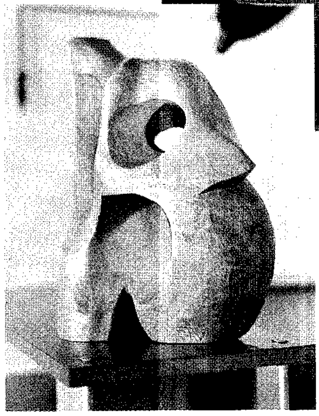
First great piece of furniture Stéphane bought
The rosewood-and-mahogany bed of "Guillaume II" (the kaiser) by Louis Majorelle, now in the Musée d'Orsay.

Furniture of today that's a classic of tomorrow
Some Phillipe Starck pieces and objets, like his tea tray; furniture from B&B Italia by Citterio.

What's ugly?
Louis XVI and sixties furniture.

Favorite low-budget shopping
Flea markets all over the world. "Our favorite, of course, is Paris's Clignancourt. But at one in Tokyo, we found interesting pieces of glass."

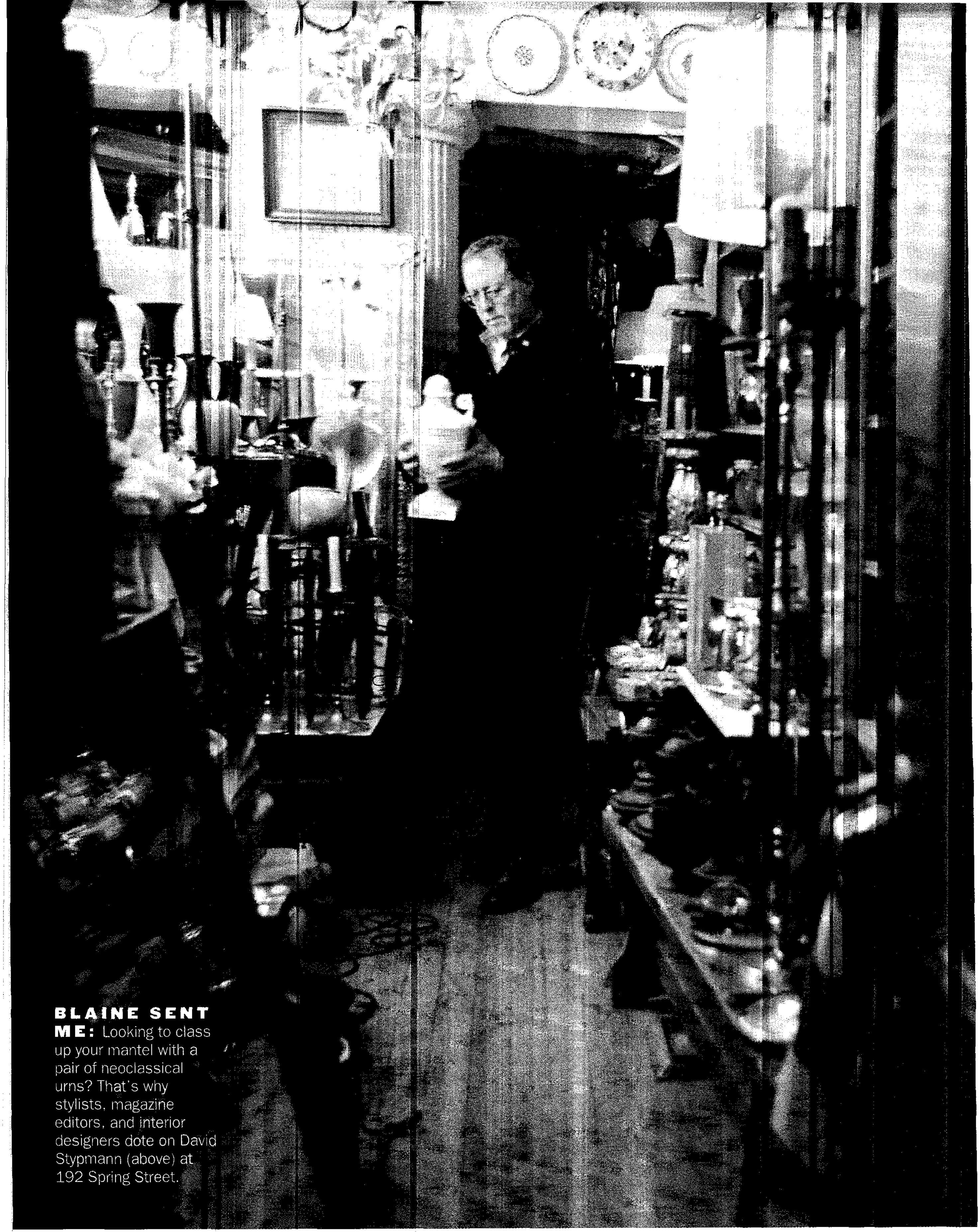
Greatest furniture designer ever
Pierre Chareau.



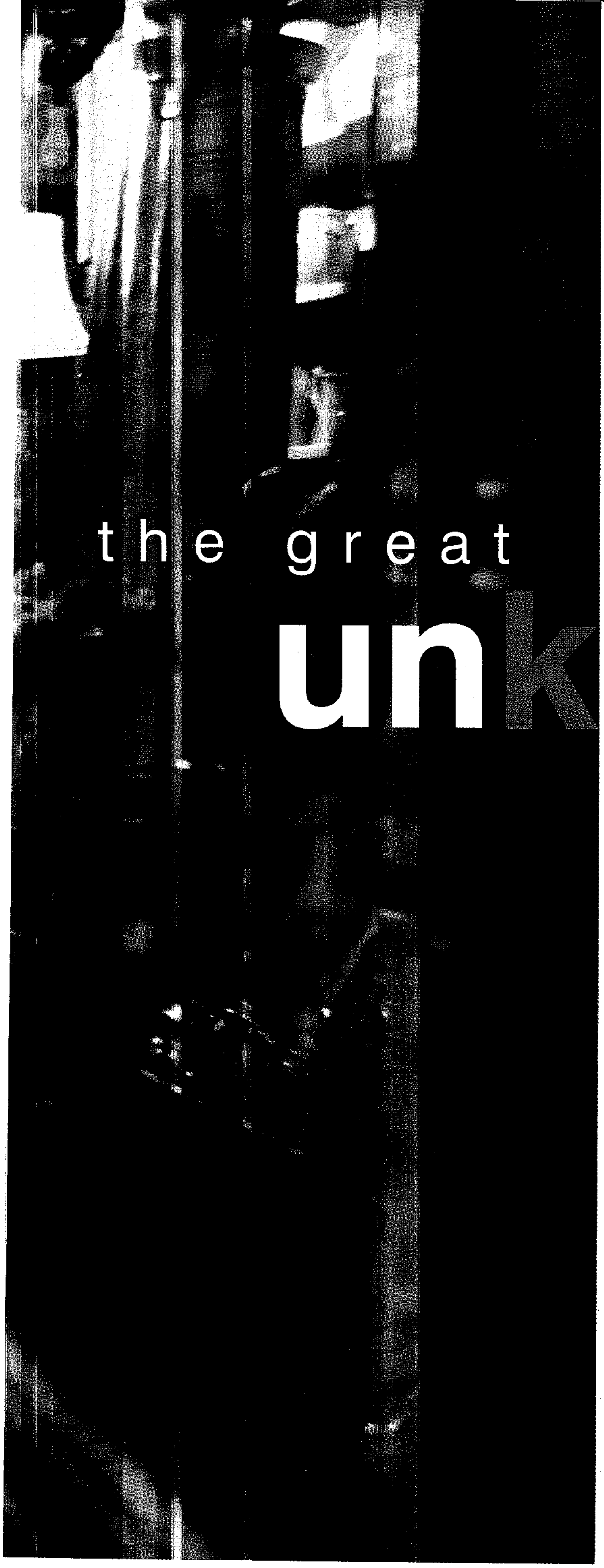
SUPPER MARKET: Above, these plates were custom-designed for the de Beyries by the young French artist Xam. Sorry, the couple is hanging on to them for now—but can they interest you in the Adnet lamp (temporarily) attached to the wall? A bargain at $9,000. Left, a fifties sycamore sculpture by Noll.

HONEY, THEY'RE HOME: Right, the de Beyries prefer that lived-in look. Opposite, the couple manage to entertain often, though they never know when they will have six dining tables—or none. Not everything has a designer label: In the foreground is a table found in Provence that was made from the trunk of an olive tree. "It's very rare that they grow that big. It must be maybe 500 years old," Catherine says. A contemporary metal shelf by Gaetano Pesce shows off the couple's collection of fifties Venetian glass.

Portrait by Michael Lisnet.



BLAINE SENT ME: Looking to class up your mantel with a pair of neoclassical urns? That's why stylists, magazine editors, and interior designers dote on David Stypmann (above) at 192 Spring Street.



Where do decorators go to ferret out the best furniture bargains? You'd be surprised. These hole-in-the-wall shops manage to be hip—without the hype.

BY VICTORIA C. ROWAN

the great unknowns

Imagine a store whose regulars drop by to gossip and watch TV with the owners on Saturday nights. A store where the business cards are rubber-stamped and cut by hand. A store where the grandfatherly proprietor gives the phone exchange as a word instead of as numbers. A store where the staff actually offers to seek out what you need instead of pushing what's on the floor. • Norman Rockwell never got around to painting this one for the *Saturday Evening Post*, but there are places just like it in New York City today, their addresses scrawled in the Filofaxes of those who have parlayed congenital good taste into a living—interior designers, that is. These storefronts are especially precious because they are the first link in the city's food chain of style: Gallery owners, decorators, architects, stylists, art directors, fashion designers, celebrities, and even museum curators regularly stop by these holes-in-the-wall to slurp up ideas for their own businesses or homes. And as an object wends its way upstream (which often means uptown), changing hands

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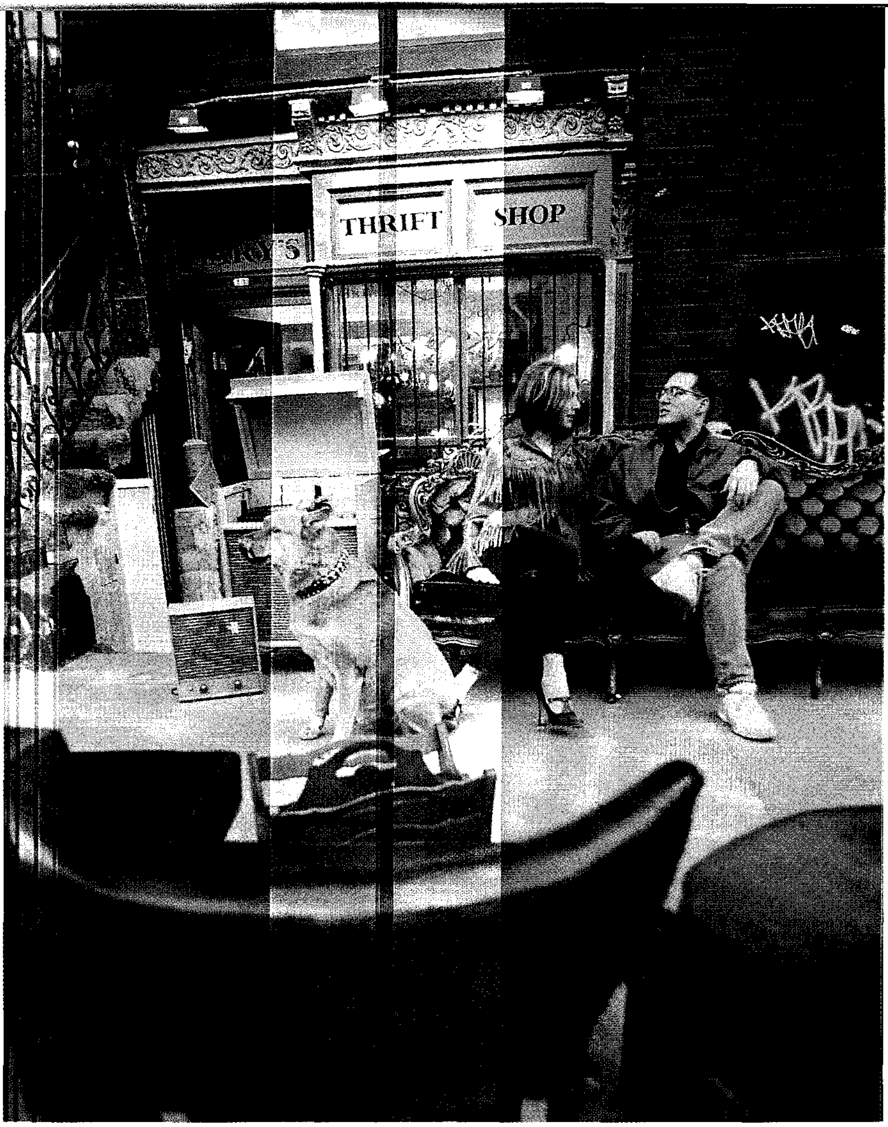


HANGING WITH THE HOME BOY: A few of the regulars at Gary's on 4th, where there's usually a TV on inside and an impromptu lounge on the sidewalk.

among retailers, it certainly becomes more expensive. So you'll want to jump in early. While the list below is not all-encompassing, it's a good primer for anyone who's ever dreamed of assembling a shelter-magazine-worthy apartment for less than a Park Avenue matron spends in a year to keep her bichon frise coiffed and manicured. Call ahead, as the hours can be as eccentric as the shopkeeps.

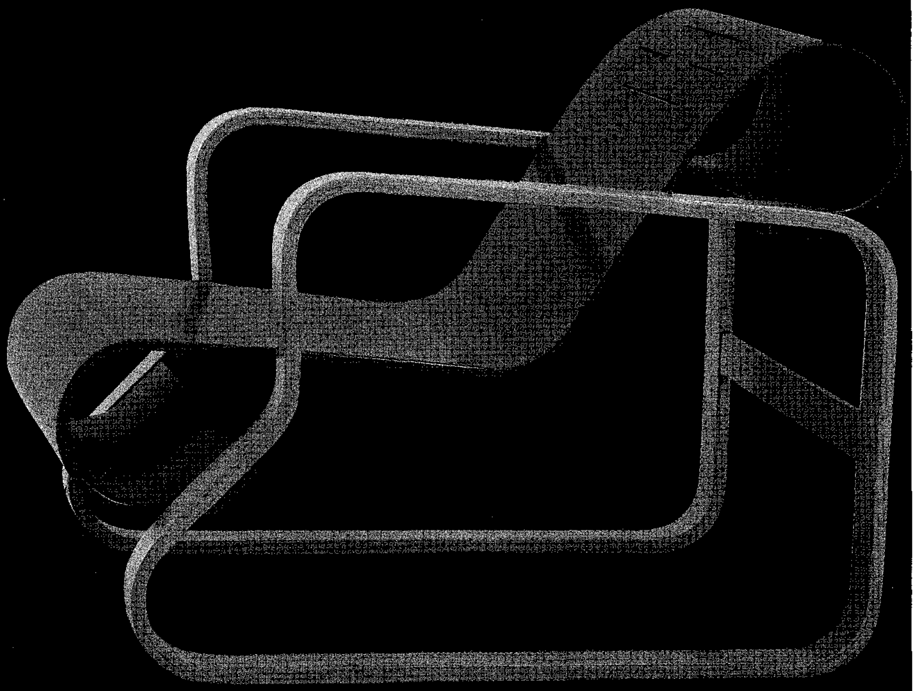
Charterhouse Antiques (115 Greenwich Avenue, at Jane Street; 243-4726) has a dusty patina, but great quarry lurks in the (mainly) unpriced pileup of Coalport, Wedgewood, Newhall, Crown Derby, and Belleek porcelain. James Ray, the 78-year-old gentleman behind the counter, who always wears a tie and his white hair crisply parted, opened this store 35 years ago. Rumor has it that Evi Quaid fills her pantry with bargains found here, that Bergdorf Goodman stalks the Spode. And Ray's cache of Russian, Polish, and German flatware, much of it from the nineteenth century, is also pretty distinguished. Among the bric-a-brac are nineteenth-century silhouettes, birdcages, ceramic molds, crystal knife rests, and single plates of all stripes. A legion of browsers, sellers, and social callers have, in some places, worn the (once shag?) carpet down to an Oriental two layers below. When I stopped by, Ray had been out sick a couple of days before, and in the space of a half-hour, three women—one a twentysomething hippie bearing homemade marble cake—came by to see how he was feeling. Clearly, being a local institution has its benefits.

For seven years, Wanda Kelly and Gary Garland's store was on 5th Street and called Tell Five Friends. But then, about a year ago, the owners up and moved farther downtown—by one block—and became **Gary's on 4th** (124 East 4th Street; 473-3558). Neighbors, MTV prop masters, and Beauty Bar and Barmacy doyenne Deb Parker make a point of wandering in, but so does Drew Barrymore, who bought lighting for her fake Christmas tree and an 8-track player with some tapes. Harvey Fierstein grabbed a giant piggy bank that fairly begged to be taken home. The hours are irregular (usually three to ten-ish), but when the shop is open, there are couches on the street and the TV is on within. Last summer, the place gained some notoriety for its Friday-night outdoor lounge-singing-tap-dance party. And everything is priced rock-bottom low to keep turnover high: vintage photos ranging from 50 cents to $2 (including some rare African-American portraits); wire-rim eyeglass frames for $18; elaborately trimmed pillbox hats for $6 to $18; working camera equipment (super-8 cameras for $24 to $36, Polaroid SX-70s for $60); typewriters for $20 to $40; and used tools, old hardware, leather luggage, and buttons galore.

Though the area is now overrun with chichi galleries, John Koch of **John Koch Antiques** (514 West 24th Street; 243-8625) has been in the neighborhood long enough—more than thirteen years—to remember when, he says, "between lovely Tenth and Eleventh Avenues" was nicknamed "Blow-Ho" for all the prostitutes. Koch's business is selling and refinishing estate goods, which he refers to with jovial irreverence as "DPS—dead people's stuff." He buys only in the five boroughs, because "New Yorkers have always been the most interesting people with the most eclectic things." The gargantuan loft is packed with thousands of disparate items. "We're totally clinical here—we process through other people's taste," says Koch. "Right now I have lots of stuff made in the thirties to the fifties, from traditional mahogany to bent plywood." Also: a wall cabinet made from parquet flooring ($295), a forties match-stick mirror frame made by a prisoner ($200), a nineteenth-century French country armoire ($2,850), an eighteenth-century painted floral wooden ceiling panel ($450), plus reasonably priced modern pieces in what Koch calls his "Grooverville" section. Not surprisingly, Koch sells to savvy members of the trade such as interior designers Steven Gambrel and Michael Buchanan. "All of SoHo cruises through twice a week," he says, and then there's the occasional guest appearance by Rick Moranis, Isabella Rossellini, Larry Hagman, Todd Oldham. Koch thinks of himself as the "ultimate recycler—not only do these things appreciate in value, but they were built to last, unlike the stuff made today that's designed to fail."

Quirky smaller shops are forced by their size to be more discriminating, and **Elizabeth 260** (260 Elizabeth Street; 941-6158) is closed often for restocking. The owner, a willowy Brazilian blonde named Ignez Whitaker, says she "buys

Alvar Aalto.



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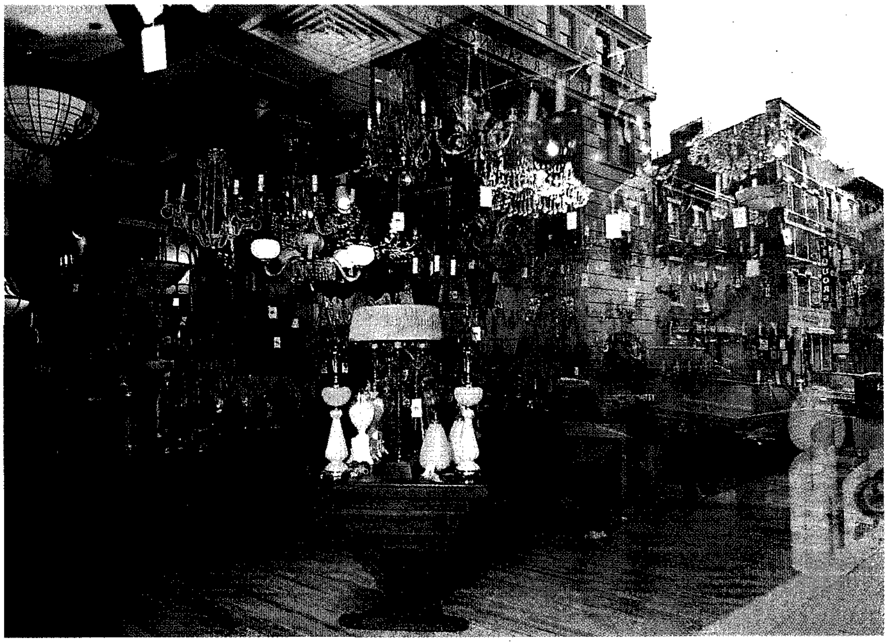
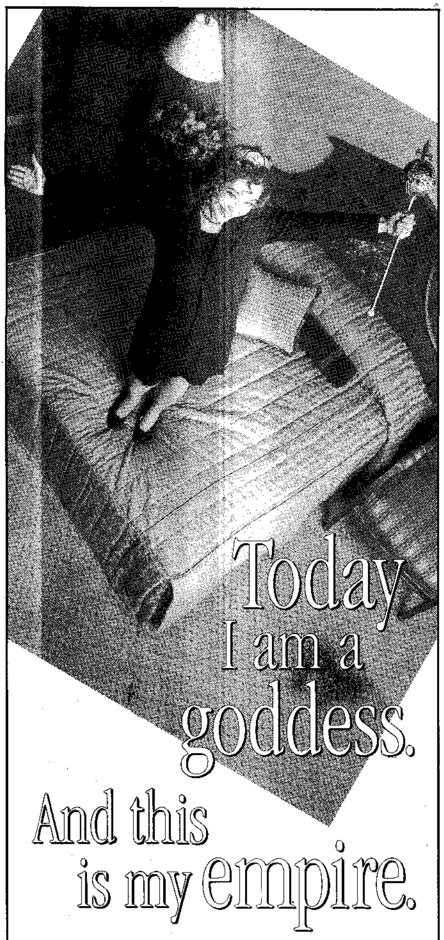
things that are on the edge—of crazy and elegant." Here one can choose from a cast-iron Victorian footstool with genuine cheetah upholstery ($495); a large gong with a bamboo stand ($620); a fifties *faux*-gator toiletry case by Samsonite ($125); hammered-aluminum trays and platters from the forties; or any one of her wacky lamps, which can mean large electrified hunks of driftwood or little gilded neoclassical numbers. The kitschy sixties lamp on her desk usually remains off "so it won't scare away the more traditional decorators." It certainly hasn't kept away Jacqueline Schnabel, Molly Ringwald, Matt Dillon, and Bette Midler, as well as many uptown and SoHo dealers. "The artists and the millionaires appreciate my shop," Whitaker says with a grin, "but the average middle-class person doesn't know what to make of this mess."



CHAMELEON'S KARMA: This little shop of lighting has a truly remarkable stash of sconces and chandeliers. Or at least Mario Buatta thinks so.

Chameleon (231 Lafayette Street, at Spring Street; 343-9197) has been around for four-odd years, but in the past three, the store has shifted into unusual lighting, specializing in pairs of wall sconces from the U.S., England, France, and Italy. (One owner's grandfather is Albert Nesle, of 57th Street's Nesle, Inc., a dealer in grand chandeliers.) On average, there are 200 pairs of sconces and 75 chandeliers in the shop; a pair of gilded Louis XVI–style palm-frond sconces from the turn of the century goes for $5,500, and a pair of European mirrored Deco sconces with glass arms is priced at $2,000. An elaborate Murano-glass chandelier will run you $4,500. Chameleon has sold to Robert A.M. Stern, Mario Buatta, and Siskin Valls, not to mention Suzanne Bartsch, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Mary Stuart Masterson.

Go west along Spring, turning right on Sixth Avenue, and you'll stumble across three stylish musketeers tucked a few steps below the sidewalk. On the pricier end is **Portobello Antiques** (190 Sixth Avenue; 925-4067), the brainchild of Englishman-in-New York Ben Izett. Izett's penchant for the dramatic and the baroque—volcanic-rock garden ornaments larger than bowling balls at $500 apiece, a nineteenth-century marble mausoleum panel for $7,500—is already well known in the decorator ambit (Carl D'Aquino, Stephen Sills, Robert Smith, Parish-Hadley, Mark Hampton, et al.). But Izett's teamed up with an old art-school buddy named John McDevitt, a Brooklyn-based metalsmith, to produce exquisite, classically inspired furniture: console tables with wrought-metal bases and marble, wooden, or various metal tops ($1,500 to $5,000); weatherproof trellis obelisks ($800 to $2,000); and lighting fixtures. McDevitt spent years producing custom work for uptown designers and decorators, where his things were sold at the D&D building for triple these prices. Next door is **CMR** (192 Sixth Avenue; 431-3691). Opened eight months ago by co-owners Carlos M. Rodriguez and Joel Mathieson, CMR has a loyal crowd of writers, artists, and uptown dealers and decorators (Nan Swid, Carl D'Aquino, Stephen Sills, the usual suspects) who keep coming back for the artworks and furniture—Mathieson worked for ten years in a shop where Portobello is now. "I like to pass bargains on



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to rich people," Mathieson says, "because it gives them a thrill." Here a pre-Columbian figure sits comfortably next to a painting by a WPA artist ($650), a twenties Italian aventurine-glass lamp ($650), and an eighteenth-century maple card table from Massachusetts ($3,200). But the most predictably rewarding shop has got to be **David Stypmann** (192 Sixth Avenue; 226-5717). The bespectacled hipster was formerly a furrier at "the real Maximillian" and later at Henri Bendel. Yet it was eleven years ago that Stypmann sank into a mid-life funk that didn't lift until his buddy, Dawn Mello—lately the president of Bergdorf Goodman—encouraged him to start his own store. The shop is perfumed with Santa Marie Novella potpourri ("Some say the place smells like their grandmother's attic—I'd love to meet those grandmothers") and is endearingly crammed with a mishmash of merchandise that overflows onto the street. Though items tend to be relatively cheap, each still manages to be marvelous: There's early-twentieth-century art pottery from England, France, Belgium, and the U.S.; Italian mirrors, "the kind that are so mottled you can't see yourself"; plant stands; finials; piano stools; and "what Billy Baldwin would have called 'drinks trays.'" Stypmann looks for things with clean lines—no floral froufrou here. A peek will leave no doubt as to why stylists from *Martha Stewart Living* and Ralph Lauren, Isaac Mizrahi, interior designer Calvin Tsao, the Fendi sisters, and Aero Studios are in full stampede. Blaine Trump, who's often in the neighborhood for her work with nearby God's Love We Deliver, pops in to see if Stypmann has vintage sporting equipment, which she uses to decorate her gym in Bedford. The photographer Mario Testino was once speeding to the airport when he made his cabbie brake for two little red end tables Stypmann had just put outside. Several months later, Stypmann noticed those very tables in a magazine spread.

Another mutually supportive mini-community is the gang of four on the seventh floor of the Chelsea Antiques Building (110 West 25th Street). Sure, there are junky cookie-jar dealers elsewhere in the building. But here on 7, the anchor is **John J. Gredler** (No. 702; 337-3667), whose large booth suggests a closet at the Vatican, with its abundance of Italiana, ranging from a palm-size Venetian sterling-silver grand-tour souvenir gondola ($475) to an eighteenth-century carved-wood console with a marble top that closely resembles a piece in one of the Metropolitan Museum's period rooms ($12,000) to unusual majolica, including a cherub-strewn seventeenth-century De-

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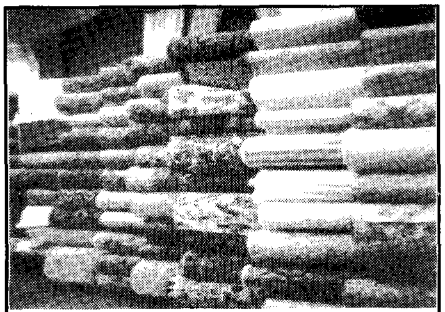

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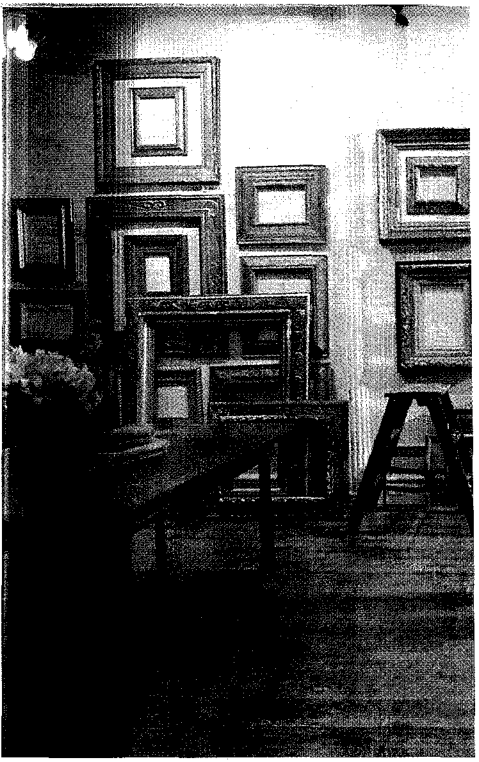
ruta holy-water font ($7,500). He also carries religious statuary. The Spanish-colonial stuff tends to be pretty gory—and popular, with collectors like Andres Serrano and Annie Leibowitz (who has an affection for reliquary busts). Next door is **C.J. Peters** (No. 704; 989-2316). A former prop stylist, Carol Peters has trained her eye to zero in on the elegant and unusual, such as vintage Fortuny fabric wall hangings, drapes, upholstered screens; large mercury-glass tabletop lamps (around $500 each, $1,800 the pair); a cast-aluminum Deco bank table with a black glass top ($5,500); and a half-dozen steel-frame, cane-seated, turn-of-the-century folding chairs ($2,000). A few steps down the strip is **Eric Appel** (No. 705; 924-0224), another dealer with a sniper's sharp eye. Appel is a fine artist in his own right who sees his shop as an extension of his interest in collage—witness the pair of six-foot plaster rococo torchères "right out of Jean Cocteau's film *Beauty and the Beast*" ($7,000), a twenties-to-forties trompe l'oeil tole chandelier ($4,500), and all manner of globes ($400 for one futuristic orb festooned with constellations; $4,500 for a topographical hand-constructed model from the estate of a Tiffany designer). Basking in abundant light at the end of the line is the booth **Kimcherova** (No. 706; 929-9720). Proprietor Ruth Kimche's appearance is nothing short of remarkable—she's a vision with Chinese-red hair and surreal wavy-frame glasses—and her store is no less so. A former fashion designer—"Today, interiors are like fashion, so it was a natural transition for me," she says—Kimche hordes extraordinary silk damasks, trims, and tassels, some dating back to the eighteenth century, and her stash is celebrated among big-name couturiers. She also has unusual antiques, including respectable original Biedermeier and Viennese Secessionist pieces.

Zona, Barneys New York, and Henri Bendel have all been customers of John and Kinnari Panikar's, fans of their gold-stenciled "light and shadow" table linens. Now the Panikars have opened **Kinnu** (43 Spring Street; 334-4775), where six dinner napkins are $45 and cocktail napkins fetch $12 apiece. (There are place mats and table runners, too.) Also unique: duvet covers ($350 to $450 in cotton, $1,000 and up for silk), scarves, and clothes all made using an ancient Indian nomadic-tribe method of tie-dying. The textiles are then hand-blocked with gold accents. Photographer Mary Ellen Mark, who's already bought several scarves, says she can't find such fine work in India anymore (where she's traveled extensively). Jack Lenor Larsen's LongHouse Foundation in East Hampton, Octavio Paz, Carly Simon, and Isabella Rossellini have also left happy.



HALL OF FRAMES: Two blocks from City Hall is the last place you'd expect to find Gill and Lagodich. The wrong frame can make you hate that painting you just dredged up at the flea market. But so can the wrong price.

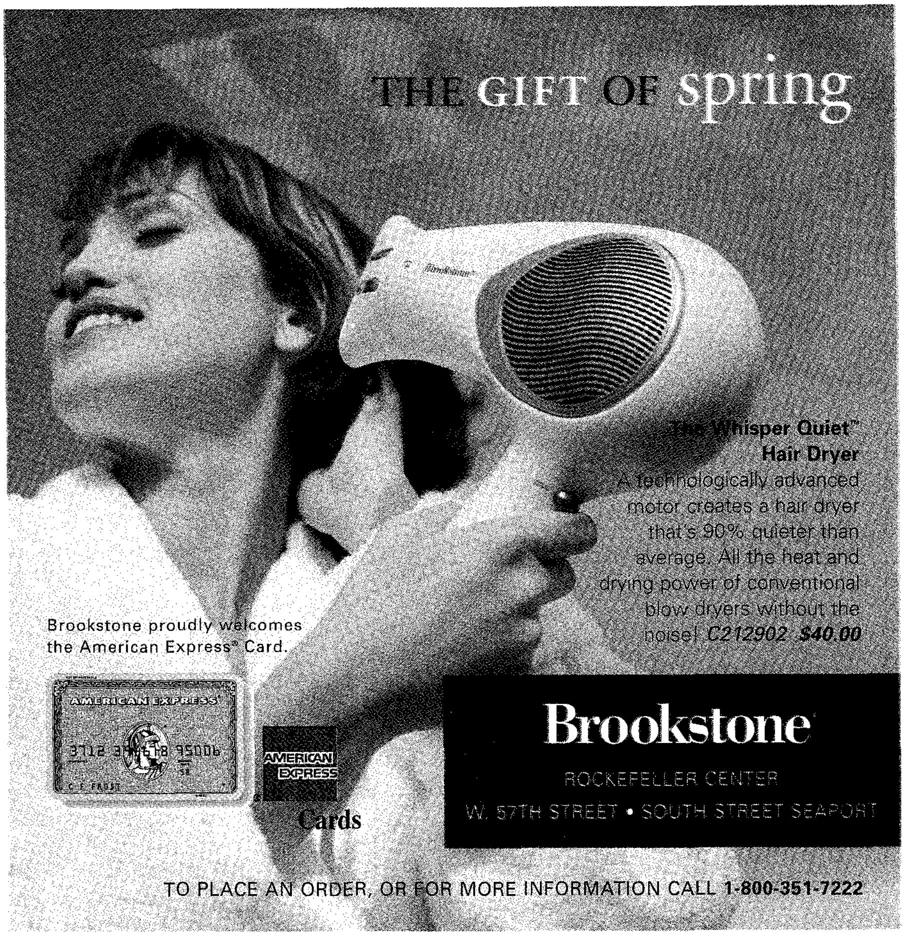
Just like a Prada dress, interiors need to be accessorized; it's what distinguishes your apartment from a hotel room. For reasonably priced used-book finds—including first editions and coffee-table reading (no Gideon Bibles)—**Bookleaves** (304 West 4th Street; 924-5638) is beloved by uptown dealers. Owner Arthur Farrier sits in the corner of the small shop, which he describes as "the living room I didn't have as a child," reading through one of his beloved reference books. "Give me something organized A to Z and I can run barefoot through it, free-associating as much as I like," he says. Farrier drove a taxi for more than twenty years, but having this store has given him his land legs back. When you're there, try to talk him into doing impressions of some of the literati—Truman Capote, Tennessee Williams, and Edward Albee—he once picked up in his cab.

Conceived as an upper-crusty bachelor's library, **Kinsey Marable & Co.** (18 East 67th Street; 717-0342) is where serious collectors of interior-design, gardening, fashion, and social-history books find them amid Rigaud-candle smoke. With his friend Charlotte Moss, the interior designer, Marable has installed a perpetually blazing fire in a marble Georgian fireplace and overstuffed couches that are

eminently well suited to browsing. A large portrait of an Edwardian gentleman surveys the cozy scene, acting as a stand-in for Marable when he's shuttling between here and his Washington, D.C., store. Periodically, Marable produces single-topic catalogues that focus on things like gardening or a special library that he's acquired—like Nancy Lancaster's. But he's known for always having plenty of Diana Vreeland (whose 1980 book *Allure* is $450) and Elsie de Wolfe (a.k.a. Lady Mendl, whose 1913 classic *The House in Good Taste* is $425 here). Very rare finds are also usually lying about: The privately published *El Morocco's Family Album* (1937; $950) is sure to loosen somebody's purse strings. While the D.C. shop—stocked with 80 percent of his collection—is already an institution, the New York store is only five months old. But that didn't stop Mark Hampton, Donna Karan, and Albert Hadley from shuffling through.

For decorative-arts research, page through the stupendous catalogue at the **Dover Publications Bookstore** (180 Varick Street, ninth floor; 255-6399). Looking to replicate J. P. Morgan's drawing room in your den? Dover has an extensive assemblage of period-interior photographs and a collection of reprinted old books.

Cabbages & Kings was ousted from the old Barbizon Hotel to make way for an Equinox gym, but owner Carol T. Ruderman has emerged from the other side of the looking glass at **Chatelaine** (39 Eighth Avenue, near Jane Street; 741-2411), now parked in a charmingly appropriate nineteenth-century triangular building. Ruderman, who says she works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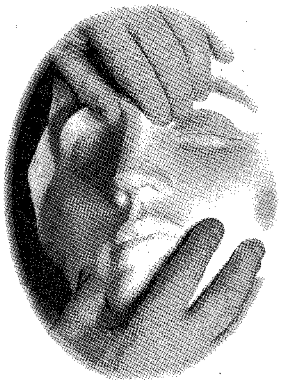

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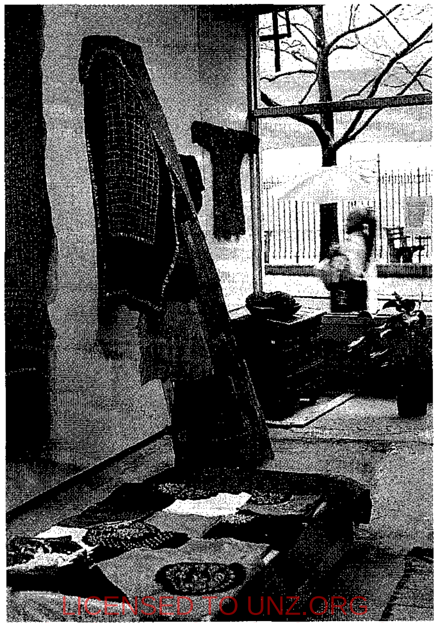
with stylists, window dressers, and designers, has Shaker wire rug-beaters ($38 to $48), which can do double duty as a graphic statement on the wall. She's been known to recommend using such anachronistic items as a Victorian sterling muffineer (a powdered-sugar shaker, $395) for Parmesan cheese or talcum powder. Ruderman often has nineteenth-century cranberry glass and oddities like a nineteenth-century lacquered Chinese wedding basket ("their equivalent of a hope chest," $750) or a mid-nineteenth-century papier-mâché tray on a stand ($1,250). Even if things are buried in stacks of silverplate, Ruderman will sell them out from under—"I've always got to make room for the new stuff," she explains.

At **Upstairs Downtown Antiques** (12 West 19th Street; 989-8715), owner William H. Strauss believes that "a store should have lots of things. The client shouldn't feel that what he buys pays the rent. Besides, people have an innate desire to uncover, to squirrel around and seek for themselves." It's hard to believe that Strauss still privately deals fifteenth- and sixteenth-century antiques, since his stock at this storefront concentrates on all things mid-twentieth-century. That would include lighting fixtures, slick "mod" appliances like typewriters and TVs from the sixties and seventies, and mass-produced American furniture by Knoll, Eames, McCobb, Saarinen, Heywood Wakefield, Nelson, Frankel, and Kagan. (There's even more in storage.) Particularly amusing is his collection of vintage Hollywood movie posters written in Spanish for Argentine distribution. Besides selling to such designers as Mario Buatta and Jed Johnson Associates, Strauss also includes Julia Roberts among the shop's devotees. But his biggest recent coup was helping to research and furnish the seventies sets of *The Ice Storm*, for which he got a film credit.

TO TIE-DYE FOR: Napkins, scarves, duvet covers, and table linens at Kinnu. Zona, Barneys New York, and Henri Bendel have already given the nod to these gold-stenciled textiles.



OBSCURE *OBJETS* OF DESIRE: Sarah Latham Kearns with her trove of teak Dansk ice buckets. It's like shopping a museum collection: Every item comes with its own researched citation.

What good is owning a great work of art—or an okay repro—if it isn't shown to its best advantage? Tracy Gill (a former editor at *Victoria* magazine who is also a gilder, author, and researcher enamored of the nineteenth century) and Simeon Lagodich (a gilder and painter) have more than 2,000 frames to choose from at **Gill & Lagodich** (108 Reade Street; 619-0631). Prices range from $100 to $30,000 for frames that wouldn't overwhelm Old Masters and modernist models that won't clash with your Ryman, but that's a fraction of what people pay in Manhattan's higher latitudes. And if you don't find something in stock for your painting, watercolor, print, or photograph, the store's staff of woodcarvers and gilders can create a custom frame, as they do for museums all the time. Of course, any frame is always the right size for a mirror, and a decorative nest of several in a group on a wall makes for an interesting effect. "People sometimes complain that we're too out of the way," says Gill, "but they change their attitude once they walk in the door of our gilded cave." Gill and Lagodich fans include DD Allen of the interior-design firm Pierce Allen, who shops here for her clients Kevin

Kline and Tommy Tune. David Bouley had all the paintings in Bouley Bakery framed here. Unlike other store owners with such valuable inventory, Gill and Lagodich encourage people to touch and look at the backs of frames. Ask a simple question and you'll get a seminar on construction techniques. Gill and Lagodich now have an exhibition of American frames from 1820 to 1920 (which has already traveled the country to critical acclaim) on the walls of the gallery-studio. Even their dog is in on the act—named Sully after a nineteenth-century frame that was favored by that artist. The shop now reproduces it, and it is the most popular style.

Sarah Latham Kearns (505-5149) teaches appraising classes at N.Y.U. and historic-preservation courses at F.I.T. But dealing Danish modern furniture and American and English arts and crafts really gets her going. Her mentor (and her former historical-preservation professor), James Marsden Fitch, liked to tease Kearns, saying her business was "really a fig leaf for acquisitiveness." Kearns worked for the Landmarks Commission until she decided to participate in the Modernism antiques show at the Armory one year, "when I made more money in one weekend than I had all year." A career move followed shortly thereafter. Now she receives clients at her Gramercy Park–area apartment, which has cool original nineteenth-century stained-glass windows. Every item she sells has its own researched citation, noting hallmarks, condition, dimension, and company history. For instance, for a rare 1936 hand-knotted wool pile rug designed by Marion Dorn ($6,000), Kearns cites a similar one in a Victoria and Albert Museum book. Not all things are nearly so bank-busting. "Right now, I'm the ice-bucket queen," Kearns says with a laugh, pointing to her collection of teak Dansk ice buckets in iconic sculptural forms designed by Jens H. Quistgaard (ca. 1958 to 1973; $150 to $300 apiece). Kearns also has charming Robert Thompson hand-carved mice ashtrays (from the twenties to the forties; $200 each). There's also a standing lamp ($3,600) and a nut bowl ($1,800) by Thompson, all crawling with little rodents. Thompson did a lot of ecclesiastical work, and the industry joke was that the woodworkers remained as poor as church mice—even if the future looks a lot more cheerful for these particular church mice, who will doubtlessly wake up one day soon to find themselves, along with new draperies and a Hepplewhite breakfront, in somebody's 10021 dining room. ■

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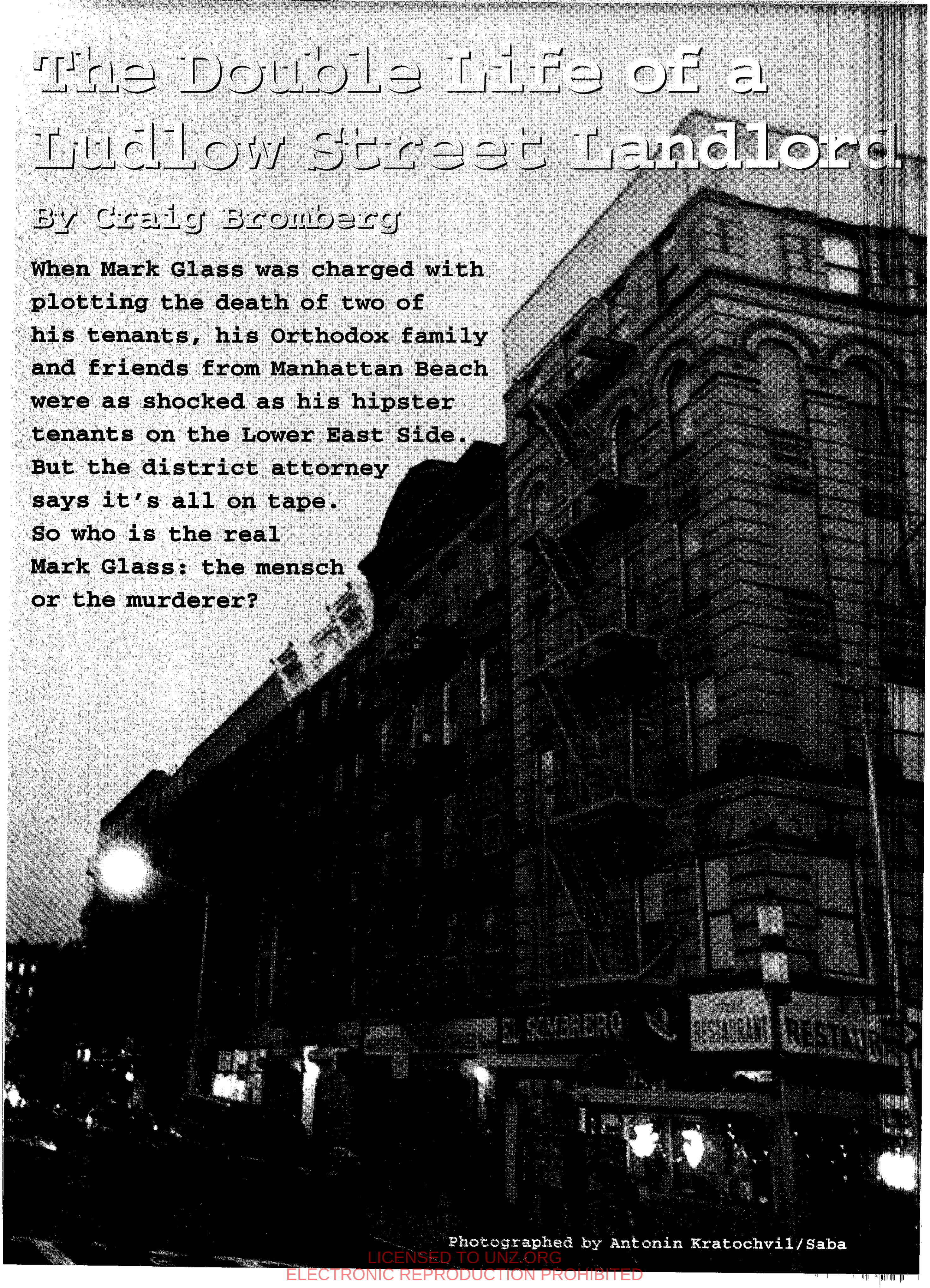
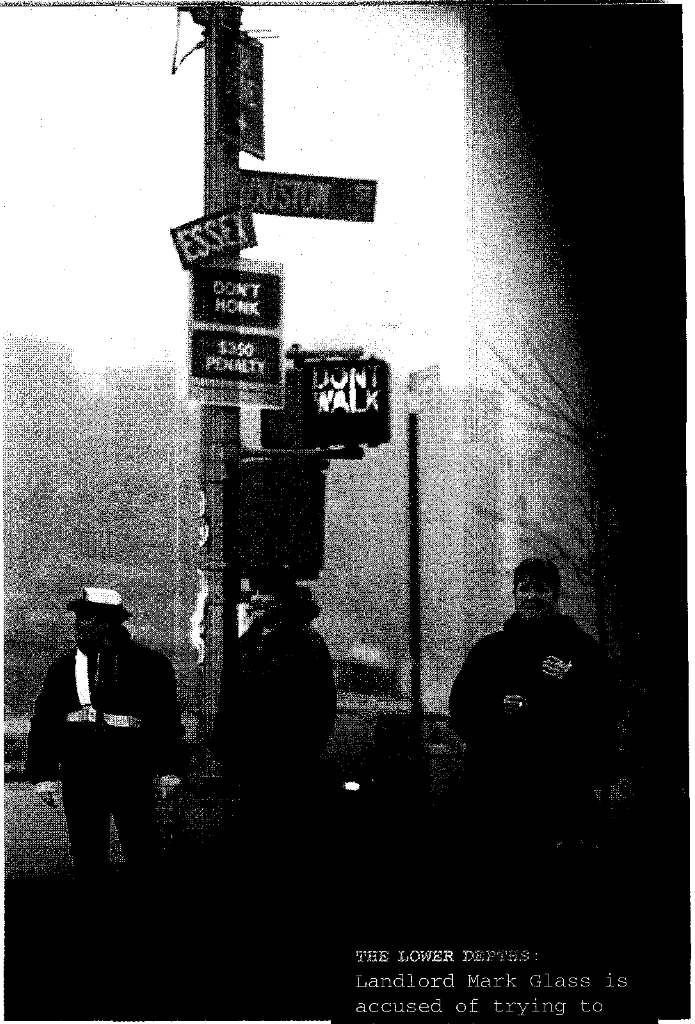
The Double Life of a Ludlow Street Landlord

By Craig Bromberg

When Mark Glass was charged with plotting the death of two of his tenants, his Orthodox family and friends from Manhattan Beach were as shocked as his hipster tenants on the Lower East Side. But the district attorney says it's all on tape. So who is the real Mark Glass: the mensch or the murderer?



Photographed by Antonin Kratochvil/Saba



THE LOWER DEPTHS: Landlord Mark Glass is accused of trying to kill Brigitte Marx (above), who rented a $390-a-month apartment from him at 42 Clinton Street (right).

THEY CAME FOR MARK GLASS AT 9 A.M. ON Erev Rosh Hashanah, the eve of one of the holiest days of the Jewish year. It was October 1, a warm, windy autumn day—rent day—and a stream of tenants was already buzzing at the door of Glass's tiny storefront real-estate office at 159 Ludlow on the Lower East Side. Except for the early holiday closing—Glass, a devout Orthodox Jew, had to get home before sundown—it was no different from any other first-of-the-month. ■ Detectives Kennedy and Bush from the NYPD Robbery Squad seemed miffed that Glass wasn't at work yet. His office manager, Jana Eitel, a plump, streetwise Byelorussian émigré who speaks six languages, each with the same accent, tried to joke with them as she dialed her boss on his cell phone—"Are you both ex-presidents?"—but the cops weren't amused, and Glass did not pick up. Instead, they had a question for *her:* "Did you know a tenant named Brigitte Marx?" ■ "Of course," she said. Ever since the paper store Eitel had worked for down the block closed five years ago, she'd managed all fifteen of Uses Realty's properties, mostly clustered on Ludlow and Clinton Streets. She knew all the tenants—which ones were troublemakers, which ones always paid their rent on time. Word had filtered through Ludlow Street that Marx had been killed, but there were no details. "Terrible thing," she sighed, cracking open her first pack of Virginia Slims for the day. "Brigitte was a good girl. Do you know what happened?" The cops were fuzzy. All they seemed to know was that Marx had been beaten and murdered somewhere uptown. They needed to get into the apartment. Could she have Mr. Glass call them when he got in?

A little after eleven, Mark Glass, an athletic 44-year-old with wire-frame glasses and a trim, graying beard, pulled up to the office in his battered cobalt-blue '72 Skylark, a $300 jalopy that was his pride and joy. His holiday davening at the Manhattan Beach Jewish Center had taken him a little longer than expected, and he was running late. Eitel told him the cops wanted him over at 42 Clinton. Glass slapped a Yankees cap over his yarmulke and ran out the door.

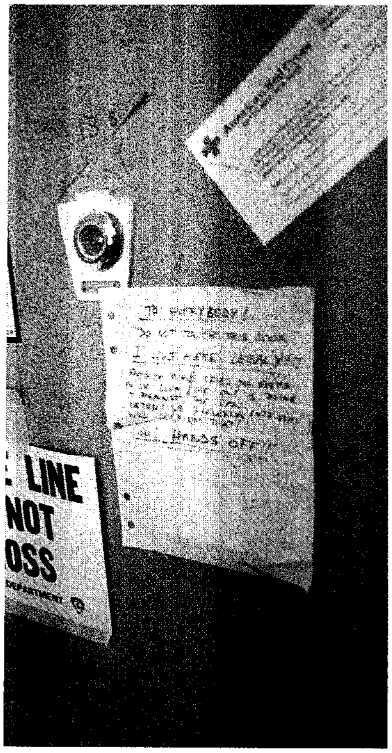
The cops were already outside when Glass arrived with his maintenance man. Glass led them up the crumbling stairs to the third floor, through a dimly lit corridor decorated with an old Jean-Luc Godard poster, to apartment 13. The cops had clearly already been there; yellow crime-scene tape zigzagged across the door. Glass fumbled for the keys and opened the apartment. Marx had meticulously renovated the tenement, skim-coating the walls and refinishing the floors. "Do you mind if I use the phone?" asked one of the cops. "It's not mine," said Glass, "but I don't see why not." The cop made his call and then walked over to the landlord. "Mr. Glass, I'm sorry, but I have some bad news," he said. "You're gonna have to come with us for some questioning in connection with the death of Brigitte Marx." And then the cop unhitched his handcuffs.

In fact, Brigitte Marx was not dead. At that moment, she was in a luxury hotel uptown, courtesy of the NYPD. Just days before Glass's arrest, the cops had recorded him on audiotape allegedly paying a hit man the final installment on a contract to kill her and her next-door neighbor. According to the Manhattan district attorney, Glass had first hired the hit man to burn Marx, a 37-year-old German freelance graphic designer, and her next-door neighbor, Bernell Crawford, an unemployed black waiter in his mid-thirties, out of their apartments; when that failed, he had taken out a contract to execute them with a lethal overdose of heroin. The hit man was part of an elaborate NYPD sting—but Glass didn't know that yet.

While the D.A.'s office slowly finalized its complaint against him, Glass sat in a holding pen at the Manhattan South Robbery Squad on 12th Street and University Place. He was in a state of shock, and all he could think about was getting home to Manhattan Beach by five o'clock, when his family would turn off the phones and leave for the synagogue. The cops let him call a lawyer, bought him a kosher sandwich, and allowed his son Mordechai to deliver a prayer book, but there was no way he would be released before sundown.

In Glass's wallet, officers found $9,000 in cash, and credit cards in the name of Alvin Weiss, Avraham Weiss, Abraham

In Glass's wallet, officers found credit
Avraham Weiss, and Mordechai Weiss.



Weiss, and Mordechai Weiss. “Who’s Weiss?” the cops wanted to know. “It’s me,” said Glass, his voice rising in an exasperated whine. He explained that his real name was Alvin Marcus Weiss—an English version of his Hebrew name, Avraham Weiss—but that in secular life and business, he went by the name Mark Glass. It was one of the many little compromises that protected him and his family from what he called the *chozzerai*—the trash—on the street: a “good covering name,” he called it. But the police weren’t buying it.

Meanwhile, at Glass’s home in Manhattan Beach, his family was just reciting the blessing over the wine for the Rosh Hashanah meal when six plainclothes officers knocked at the door with a search warrant. His wife was incensed. “Isn’t there any way this can be done tomorrow?” she pleaded, but the lead detective claimed he was working under strict orders from the top: “Robert Morganthau told me we had to do this tonight, and do it by nine o’clock.”

While the family continued its dinner, the police began tearing through Glass’s tiny office, a dusty tangle of old 8-tracks, Yankees memorabilia, and sporting equipment. They found three vintage .22-caliber rifles, a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun, a .22-caliber Ruger pearl-handled pistol, several hundred dollars in gold Krugerrands, and numerous pieces of identification, including bond certificates, bank statements, Social Security cards, and driver’s licenses for New York, London, and Israel—in every name but Mark Glass. Who *was* this guy?

Six months later, Glass still remains in protective custody at the Brooklyn House of Detention, and inexplicably, no trial date has yet been set. It is an extraordinary amount of time for a suspect to be held in a case in which there has been no physical harm, but the D.A. believes that Glass is a violent and greedy landlord who tried to murder two tenants guilty of nothing more than demanding their rights under the city’s rent laws. Still, some question such an elaborate sting against a popular landlord who has operated in a tough, down-at-the-heels neighborhood for two decades without a problem—especially the use of a convicted drug dealer trying to avoid a life sentence. And what about Brigitte Marx? Is she a glamorous young graphic artist who is the innocent victim of a devil landlord’s venality or a troubled woman with a history of drug abuse? Finally, who is the man the police are still holding: Alvin Weiss, the mensch of Manhattan Beach, or Mark Glass, a would-be murderer who just could not resist the temptations of Ludlow Street’s darker side?

A WEEK AFTER HIS ARREST, GLASS WAS BROUGHT in manacles from Rikers Island to State Supreme Court in Manhattan for a bail hearing, and every bench in the 150-seat courtroom was filled. Glass’s family and friends, conservatively attired Orthodox Jews, jostled for seats with tenants from his buildings, a phalanx of Lower East Side hipsters dressed in black. A rabbi with a flowing white beard and a streimel sat ramrod-straight watching the proceedings with a disapproving *tsk*. Glass’s wife and two sons buried their noses in prayer books. “It’s like *Alice in Wonderland*,” she told me. “I keep looking for the mirror.” She was hopeful her husband would be home for Yom Kippur, but Assistant D.A. Francine James was adamant that Glass be held without bail.

Glass’s attorney, Martin Adelman, a chain-smoking criminal lawyer with a penchant for quoting Thomas à Becket, cried foul. For 24 years, he said, Alvin Weiss had lived in the same house and run the same business. Here was a man with an extraordinary history of stability and community ties; he was an active member of synagogues on Rivington Street and in Manhattan Beach, where he supervised a basketball game with neighborhood kids every Saturday night. Adelman offered as a bond Glass’s $600,000 house, $50,000 in cash, his family’s passports, and a complete waiver of his future extradition rights from any country—but bail was still denied.

Glass’s tenants were also bewildered by the D.A.’s vehemence. The man the New York *Post* had branded a “devil landlord” wasn’t the Mark Glass they knew. In a city where nearly

cards in the name of Alvin Weiss,
“Who’s Weiss?” the cops wanted to know.

every tenant has a horror story to tell about a landlord—and vice versa—Glass was remarkably well liked, often letting tenants go for months without paying rent. Killing a tenant for the measly 10 percent rent hike a renovated apartment can fetch hardly seemed to be his modus operandi.

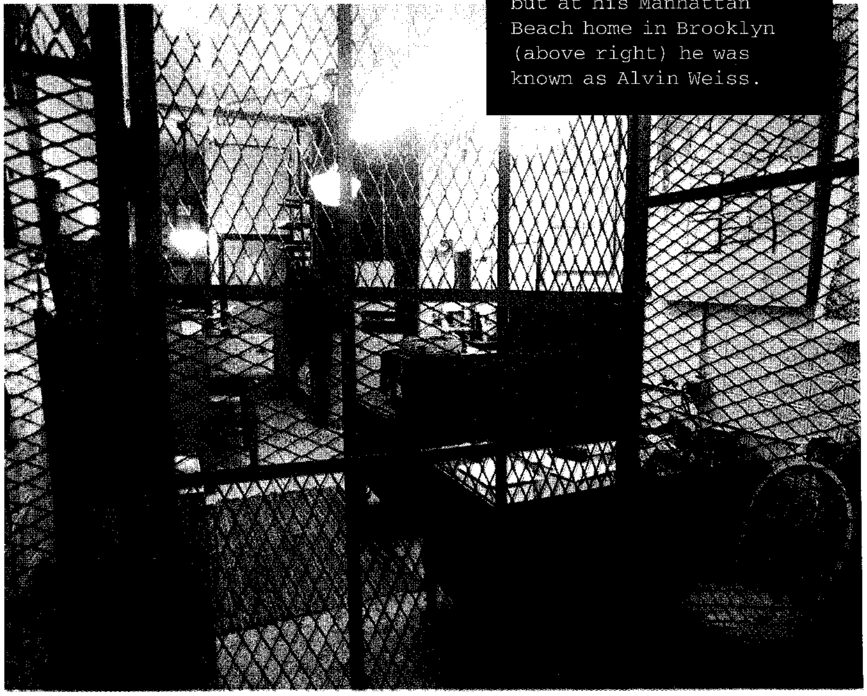
"He really is the hassle-free landlord," says Nancy Brooks Brody, an artist who has rented apartments and studios in Glass's buildings since she was 17. "If I was broke and I couldn't pay the rent, he wouldn't call me up, wouldn't harass me. It'd be 'Hey, Nance, when are you gonna come see me?' He wouldn't even mention the rent." Other tenants told similar stories. Nearly all had at some time or other fallen behind and were grateful to Glass for not embarrassing them about it. "It's a regular thing down here," says Chris Bongirne, a film producer who lives with his wife and their baby two flights down from Marx at 42 Clinton. "People are out of a job or working on a project, and they just catch up when they can. If he wanted to flip her apartment so bad, why didn't he torch my place? I pay less than she does. Better yet, he could have killed the guy who lives upstairs. He's so crazy, the New York *Press* even put him on its cover. He hasn't paid rent in ten years. He says there's a CIA conspiracy against him. They've been in landlord-tenant court for years."

At the bail hearing, Assistant D.A. James urged the judge not to be swayed by the large crowd supporting the defendant. The case against him was strong and substantial; he was a "violent and dangerous individual," charged with four counts of conspiracy, arson, and attempted murder. If convicted, he would go to jail for the rest of his life. Mark Glass, she said, "was much more than a slum landlord. [He] is a very violent and unconscionable man, an individual who for years has simply intimidated, threatened, and engaged in acts of arson, illegal evictions, and now, worst of all, a plot to kill two tenants in his apartment building." Given the existence of so many different pieces of identification showing so many different addresses, even different vehicle registrations, she added, he had to be kept in jail: "The people are uncertain as to who the defendant really is."

GLASS AND HIS PARTNER, ELLIOT Kurlander, a childhood friend, hardly seemed to be driven by ambition. A yeshiva boy from Brighton Beach, where his father, a survivor of a Siberian labor camp, worked for Pechter's Bakery, Glass had gone into real estate after receiving a master's degree in child education from Long Island University. People always need buildings, his family said, so he and Kurlander found a cheap one on Ludlow and Stanton. (Kurlander, who has not been charged with any crime, refused to be interviewed for this story.)

"It was a backdoor play," Glass told me in the counsel room at the Brooklyn Men's House of Detention. His face was ashen, his voice softened to a whisper. "We took over a hardware store, and the owner eventually said the building had to come with it. He was basically giving it to us for free. I didn't start off thinking I needed $1,000 a week to live; I started with modest aspirations. It's not like a one-year boom of success with mortgages and borrowing and schemes to hike the rent and evict people. There are people who have nothing rents. They can't pay more."

It was the cheap rent that had drawn Glass's tenants to Ludlow Street in the first place. Bordered on the north by Katz's Deli on Houston Street and on the south by the projects hovering over Delancey Street, the area had been home to successive generations of Russian Jews, Italians, Puerto Ricans, and Dominicans who settled there and eventually moved on. However, by the early eighties, the gentrification of the East Village and the tight rental market throughout the city had sent the young and hip scurrying into one of the last unhyped areas in Manhattan. Ludlow Street was cheap and convenient, and Glass was known as an easy touch. He didn't ask for references or expensive deposits; all he wanted was the first and last month's rent and a promise you'd pay reasonably on time. His apartments weren't renovated, the common areas were often falling down, and Glass usually didn't bother with written leases, but tenants who wanted to renovate merely had to ask, and he would allow them to deduct the cost of the materials (if not the labor) from their rent. For six years, I was one of them. In 1982, I moved into a black shell of an apartment, a classic railroad flat with a tub in the kitchen and rats in the wall, but by the time I left, I had a brightly painted apartment with a shower stall, thanks to Glass.

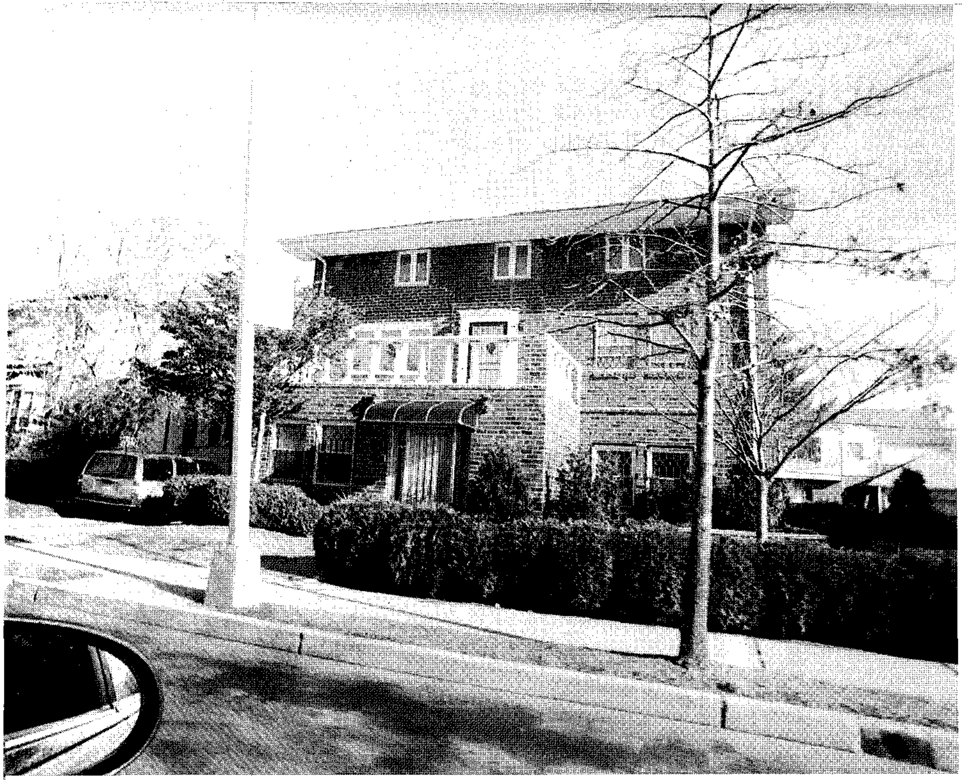


BETWEEN TWO WORLDS: In his storefront office on Ludlow Street (below) he was called Mark Glass; but at his Manhattan Beach home in Brooklyn (above right) he was known as Alvin Weiss.

By 1990, Ludlow Street was developing a weird kind of reverse status. Kiki Smith, Izhar Patkin, Jim Casebere, Erika Beckman, Ellen Berkenblit, Joseph Nechvatal, and dozens of other artists lived and worked there, and the once-deserted blocks had started sprouting bars, restaurants, boutiques, and hot clubs.

Among the first of these pioneers was the millinery and dress shop of Amy Downs and Mary Adams, which opened on the corner of Stanton Street in 1986. Downs, a Minneapolis native

"If he wanted to flip her apartment
less than her. He could have killed the guy



who speaks with a Twin Cities twang, was a tenant in one of Glass's buildings, struggling to get her hat business off the ground. One day, out of the blue, Glass suggested she take over the hardware store on the corner of Ludlow and Stanton. He would give her six months' free rent and let her renovate the store any way she wanted. "I know it sounds corny," she says, "but he really gave me a break in New York. He gave me my chance. He said, 'I think you're talented and hardworking, and I have a store. Do you want one?' Somewhere down the line, I think he expected us to return his investment, and we did—but it wasn't the money he was after. I think he thought it would be fun, and even fantasized about going into the fashion business."

Indeed, whether it was about business or about the neighborhood girls, whom he would ogle and sometimes joke with about trading rent for sex, Glass often seemed to talk a big game. He may have been utterly committed to his family and to living an Orthodox Jewish life, but Ludlow Street's seamy success had an undeniable pull on him. After Uli Rimkus, a German artist who was another tenant in one of his buildings, decided to start a bar in a vacant store up the block, Glass gave her four months' free rent and various credit references. Max Fish soon became a big hit. "One day the *Times* reported that it was the hottest bar in town, and Mark came over and said, 'You see this? I made this happen,' " remembers Gadi Gilan, the owner of an antiques store in one of Glass's buildings on the south side of Houston Street between the Bowery and Elizabeth Street.

But Gilan also witnessed the results of Glass's largesse firsthand when he started his own restaurant, Café Colonial, on the corner of Elizabeth and Houston. "Landlords are usually horrible," he says. "If you're a day late, they penalize you; if you need repairs, they won't help. These guys gave you help if you needed it. It's trust, the old Jewish way of doing business, like on 47th Street. You make a deal, say *mazel* and *broche*, shake hands, and it's done."

Not all of Glass's tenants thought he was such a mensch. "Believe me," says one who prefers not to be identified in print, "when he needed the rent, he'd let me know. He was threatening. I was scared of him." She says that Glass often played favorites with tenants and could be intimidating if need be, especially with the elderly.

BRIGITTE MARX WASN'T SCARED OF Glass—at least not at first. We meet at Baby Jake's, a grungy Tex-Mex bar near Houston Street; she is wearing a crinkly black rayon overcoat over a black turtleneck sweater and brown velvet jeans. Her hair is stringy, her hands blotchy, and she never stops twisting her gold rings of snakes and cats. She says she knows she shouldn't be talking to a reporter, but she is afraid Glass will smear her, even from behind bars.

Marx first came to New York from Berlin in 1984, just for a visit, but she soon fell in love with the Lower East Side. Over the next few years, she returned several times, periodically subletting an apartment on Ludlow Street and then living on Avenue D. In November 1993, Glass offered her an apartment at 42 Clinton for $500 a month. Marx thought that was expensive, but Glass was happy to help her renovate. "It was a dump," she says with a slight German accent. "There was a hole in the ceiling, and I was afraid it would come down on me. I got a contractor friend to fix it, and also put a new floor in the bedroom. It was very peaceful. I did the work and they paid me for the paint and materials. Everything was fine."

But then one of her friends told her to check the rent records, and, according to Marx, she discovered that the previous tenant had paid only $255 a month. "Here it was two years later and he was asking $500," she says. She studied the law: On a rent-stabilized apartment, she says, Glass was only entitled to a 10 percent increase per year, and then only if the apartment was renovated. "I could accept if he was charging me $50 or $100 more, but $300? I felt taken advantage of. It was deceptive. So I filed a complaint with the Department of Housing and Preservation. That was my big mistake. He came around all smiley, but I knew he hated my guts. As a compromise, he offered me a $390 rent and a written lease. I accepted it because I had already put a lot of work into the place, but I could see he hated me."

Over the next year, Marx began to feel that Glass was ignoring her complaints, although she continued to pay her rent on time. She was particularly concerned about the lack of separation between her and the adjoining apartment, occupied by Bernell Crawford and his brother, Luis. When the building was constructed, the two apartments shared a front door at the end of the corridor connecting them. Marx wanted to replace the flimsy bedroom doors that separated the two apartments, but Glass dragged his feet. She was angry that she and Crawford shared an electric meter and that Glass's workmen were slow fixing leaks that, she says, turned Crawford's kitchen into a waterfall. (Crawford refused to comment for this article.) Finally, Marx began deducting money for her Con Ed bill and

so bad, why didn't he torch my place? I pay upstairs. He hasn't paid rent in years."

filed a formal request for rent reduction with the city.

Last February, says Marx, Crawford came back from staying at a girlfriend’s to find that his apartment had been burglarized, his mattress thrown on the street—and the locks changed. “What burglar takes the time to change the locks on the way out of an apartment?” she says. “It was so obviously the landlord.” Then, on March 13, she was working in TriBeCa when she heard from Glass’s office that Crawford’s apartment was on fire. “He made it sound like it was burning to the ground,” she says, starting to cry. “Mostly, I was afraid for my cat, Misery. I thought I was going to have a heart attack. When I got there, the firemen had hacked a hole in my ceiling, but my cat was okay. My apartment wasn’t damaged too badly—fireman damage instead of fire damage—but they had to smash the windows out of Bernell’s. It was a disaster. I told the fire marshal what happened, and he said they were sure it was arson. He said he wouldn’t be surprised if it was *my* apartment that got burglarized next.”

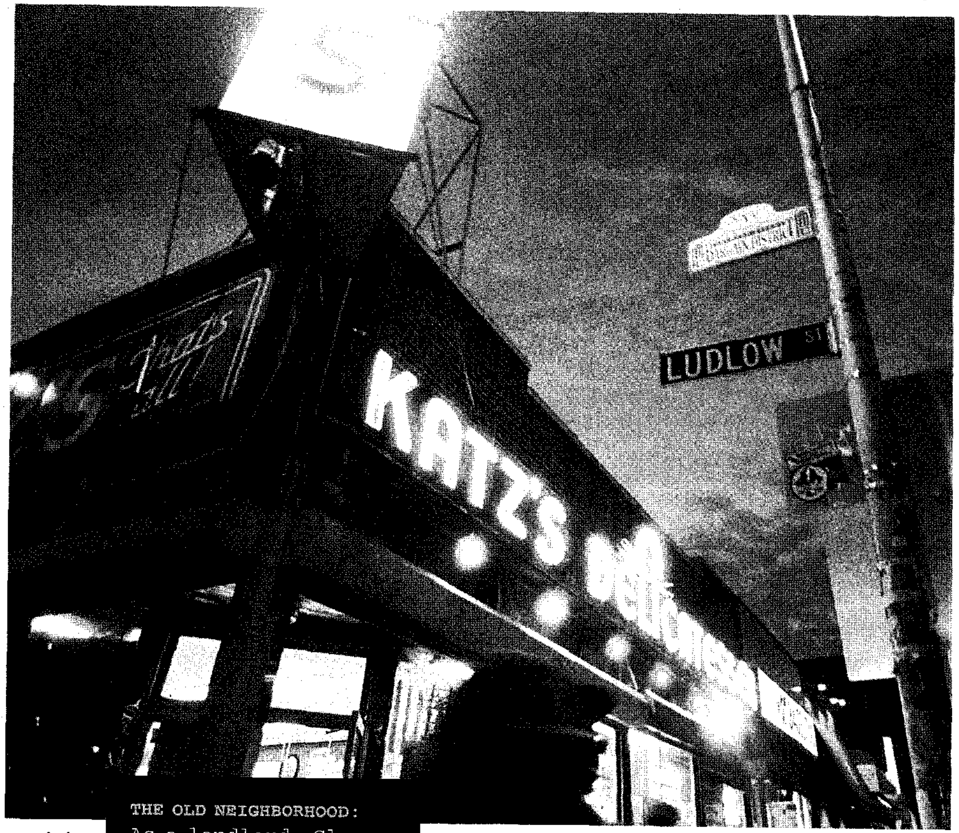
Marx was shocked when she came downstairs a week later to find an eviction notice addressed to her posted in plain view next to the building’s mailboxes. According to the letter from Glass’s lawyer Benjamin Kaplan, Marx’s apartment was being used “for illegal and immoral purposes. Drug dealers and drug users are going and coming into your apartment at all hours of the day of night [*sic*], often when you are not home, and other persons have been seen entering the building with keys and going up to your apartment. . . . In addition, a recent fire which occurred in the building was initiated from your apartment and the tenants of the building fear for their safety as the result of ongoing drug activity in your apartment.”

Marx wrote back to Kaplan, saying that the charges against her were “based on malicious rumors and gossip. . . . The D.A. will confirm that I am no suspect or in any way related to the arson. Which tenants [are accusing me]? Certainly not my next-door neighbor.”

What Marx did not know was that a few days after the fire, nine of her neighbors—including Bernell Crawford—had filed a petition with Glass advocating “the eviction of the occupant of apartment 13 because ongoing activity associated with drugs—drug addiction—[has] convinced us that something must be done to insure the security of our homes.” Apparently, the tenants had been complaining about Marx’s erratic behavior for years. Some claimed that she often had heroin delivered to her apartment, and that on several occasions the door of the building had been kicked in by drug dealers who were angry she was not home. One neighbor, Casandra Mele, remembered an incident from two years ago in which Marx was in a violent fight with Bernell Crawford’s brother. “I live right below her,” she says, “so I could hear everything. One night, she had a fight with Luis in the hallway and squirted his door with blood from a hypodermic. It was some sort of weird psychosexual obsession.” Another neighbor, painter Ann Messner, recalls that “there just wasn’t normal behavior coming out of that person’s apartment. We all have examples of her behaving strangely.”

After the fire, says Mele, “we felt: Enough is enough. We may never know who actually set it, but it motivated us to get an eviction. It freaked us out, but it didn’t make sense that Mark would set a fire to get one tenant out. It seemed more like a drug problem, and it all came down to this one person.” Other sources, unrelated to this case, have also claimed that Marx used heroin, but she flatly denies using drugs and laughs at the hypodermic story. “It’s just not true,” she says quietly. “People in the building have an ulterior motive. My apartment is one of the most renovated in the whole building, and I suspect [Glass] promised someone my apartment if he could get me out.”

For the next few months, Marx and Glass battled through their lawyers. Marx threatened Glass with a harassment suit, and Glass pressed for her eviction through Ben Kaplan, who says Glass is the least litigious landlord he has ever represented. In May, Marx met Kaplan at landlord-tenant court for a final confrontation, but Kaplan decided—“on the spot,” he says—not to go ahead with the eviction. “As soon as I spoke to her, I knew this case could not be won in a million years. We had no witnesses, and what she told me about the fire made me realize we couldn’t win. It took five minutes of talking to her to realize that I found her to be totally credible. She seemed serious, telling the truth. She’s no junkie.”



THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD: As a landlord, Glass was a much-loved figure on the Lower East Side, and he was credited with helping revive the area during the nineties.

FIVE DAYS AFTER THE FIRE AT MARX’S APARTMENT, the police picked up a suspect based on an identification made by another tenant at 42 Clinton. It didn’t take long for Juan Hernandez Jr., known around Ludlow Street as Peewee, to confess. He had set the fire, but he was working for someone else—Eddie Almestica. Coincidentally, the cops already had Eddie in custody on charges of attempted robbery. Eddie had been working as a bouncer at the Ludlow Street Bar and didn’t like the way some of the patrons were behaving, so he forced them into the street, hitting them up for money and sending one to Bellevue for stitches. After a few days' custody at Rikers Island, Eddie Almestica was released on bail—$2,000 of which had been pledged by Mark Glass.

On Ludlow Street, Eddie and his brother Fernando were well known for running the street's heroin trade. Crazy Eddie, now 30, was considered a loose cannon, no doubt partly for his prodigious use of angel dust. Short, fat, and muscular, with a taste for flashy gold, fancy track suits, and MAC-10 machine guns, he has been in and out of the criminal justice system for the past ten years. In 1988, he was arrested for narcotics possession and sentenced to five years' probation; in 1990, he was busted for selling drugs and resisting arrest, was sentenced to two to four years, and did a yearlong stretch at Downstate Correctional; that same year, he served another 30 days for resisting arrest and criminal possession of a weapon, this time after dancing over the roofs of parked cars on Ludlow Street; and in April 1995, Eddie was arrested yet again for resisting arrest after what one law-enforcement official called a "high-speed car chase," but he was given only a desk-appearance ticket.

For more than fifteen years, the Almesticas had been selling heroin on Ludlow Street and in the South Bronx, Brooklyn, and East Harlem. (They kept their stash in Peewee's Ludlow Street apartment, hidden under his bed in a tank used for his pet snakes.) But in October 1995, a joint DEA/NYPD task force finally put the brothers out of business in a dramatic raid replete with wiretaps, no-knock search warrants, and a helicopter hovering over Ludlow Street. Eddie, Fernando, Peewee, and the rest of the gang all pleaded guilty to charges of possession and distribution of heroin. Under the federal mandatory-sentencing guidelines enacted by Congress in 1984, Eddie was facing a minimum of 40 years in prison—not to mention the fact that he was already on probation for a previous offense—yet Judge Robert Patterson chose to release Eddie on his own recognizance.

Later, he seems to have bartered some information about the fire in Marx's apartment—and Glass's involvement—in hopes of reduced prison time. He began cooperating with the police and soon started wearing a wire; during this time, the D.A. alleges, Glass hatched the plot to murder Crawford and Marx.

According to new charges that have recently been added to the case, Glass and Almestica had been working together at least as far as back as May 1996,

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when Glass allegedly hired him to torch an apartment at 172 Ludlow. But Almestica and Glass had known each other even longer than that. Through most of the eighties, Eddie and his father lived in 170 Ludlow; his father was even the building's super for several years. For much of that time, their relationship seems to have been antagonistic. At one point, says Glass's lawyer, the landlord was so concerned about Eddie's drug trafficking, he gave Eddie and his father money to move out. By 1995, they had at least evolved what Glass's lawyer calls an "entente cordiale: You stay away from my buildings, and I'll leave you alone."

WHETHER GLASS IS FOUND guilty will eventually come down to what he said to Eddie Almestica on those tapes. Are they, as Glass's lawyers will say, merely ambiguous conversations about money or, as the D.A. will say, a conspiracy to kill two tenants? "A real streetwise landlord wouldn't even talk to Eddie," says Gadi Gilan. "Mark has a big mouth, he likes to talk the talk, but he's just not seasoned enough to know how to deal with a scumbag. This guy is a convicted felon. He's got everything to gain; you've got everything to lose. If he talks to you, you look the other way. I guess that's not what happened."

At Glass's last bail hearing, a new assistant D.A., Robert Seiden, had taken over the case. He told the court that "this is really a case of a man with multiple identities and, I submit, multiple personalities. We really don't know under what circumstances he will show himself to be who he really is or how we could ever find out who he really is." Glass may be well liked in Brooklyn, said Seiden, "but when he goes to the Lower East Side and he runs his business, we know from the witnesses we've spoken to that he is a very dangerous man."

Glass's side also thinks the case comes down to questions of character. What motive could he have had to kill Marx and Crawford? His house in Manhattan Beach is hardly the $2 million mansion the prosecutors have claimed. "Maybe if I was a gambler and I went to nightclubs and I had a big nut to fill every week," Glass says from prison. "But we lived for many years and still do in a very straight way. I don't buy things I can't afford. I don't go anywhere I don't feel comfortable. We bought our house with wedding presents. I've never bought a new car in my life. Last year I bought an '88 Volvo for $1,800. My wife hates the Skylark, but I've had Skylarks for twenty years. It's just who I am."

Indeed, for everything the D.A. says is a sign of his "multiple identities," Glass has a ready explanation: The gold coins were religious tokens given to him for his *pidyon haben,* the symbolic fee devout Jews pay to free a first-born son from his priestly duties. Two of the guns were bought one summer while he was renting a bungalow upstate; the shotgun and pistol were found in the boiler room of one of his buildings. ("I didn't know what to do with them," he says.) His name is Avraham Weiss, which is the same as Abraham Weiss and was translated by his father as Alvin Marcus Weiss. Joseph Schliecher, the name on one of the bank statements found in his house, is a Holocaust survivor he takes care of at a nearby nursing home; Abe Thau is a recently deceased friend whose estate he was managing. At home, his friends and family switch easily between Mark and Alvin. Mark Glass, he says, was an amalgam of Mark (from Marcus) and the surname of a former partner, an Israeli named Moishe Glass, who had loaned him and Kurlander some money to buy 42 Clinton when they were first starting out. "The D.A. told things that are not lies—they're worse than lies," Glass says angrily, pulling on the seam of his gray prison overalls. "They could have told the truth. There was every opportunity to tell the truth."

If anyone's character should be under the spotlight, says Martin Adelman, it is Eddie Almestica's. "It's a sham of a farce of a mockery," he says. "If Eddie was already working for the state, he shouldn't have set that fire. And once he did, he shouldn't have been allowed to go free. Since when have you ever heard of a convicted felon being allowed to get away with an arson without even being charged?" Adelman wonders whether there are ties between Marx and Almestica, a junkie and a dealer: Perhaps they wanted Crawford's apartment for themselves? For her part, Marx denies knowing either Eddie or Peewee. "Eddie is an angel," she says. "He could have killed me. Some people would have done it for a lot less."

In the meantime, Mark Glass—or Alvin Weiss—sits in prison without bail, denying the charges against him but resigned to his trials. "My family—my parents, my grandparents, my wife's parents—they all went through the worst experiences of history," he says. "There were acts of kindness given to them, so I feel if I can manage, it's enough. It will work itself out." And then he is taken back to his cell, as far from Manhattan Beach as it is from Ludlow Street. ■

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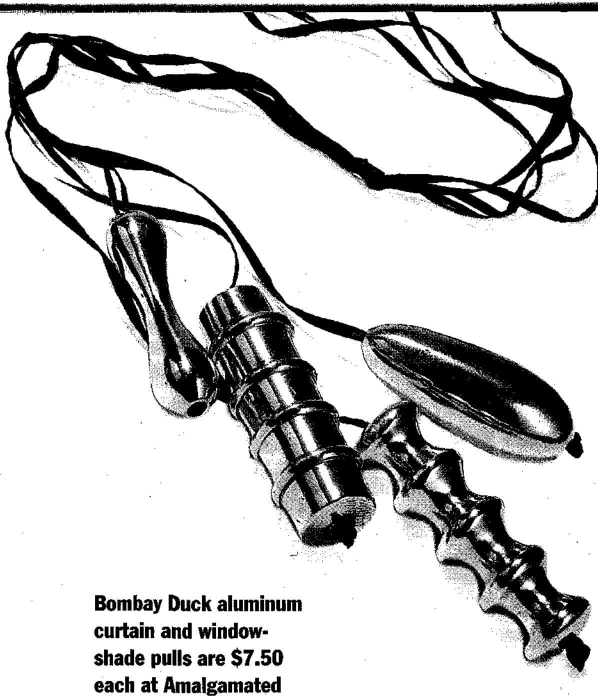
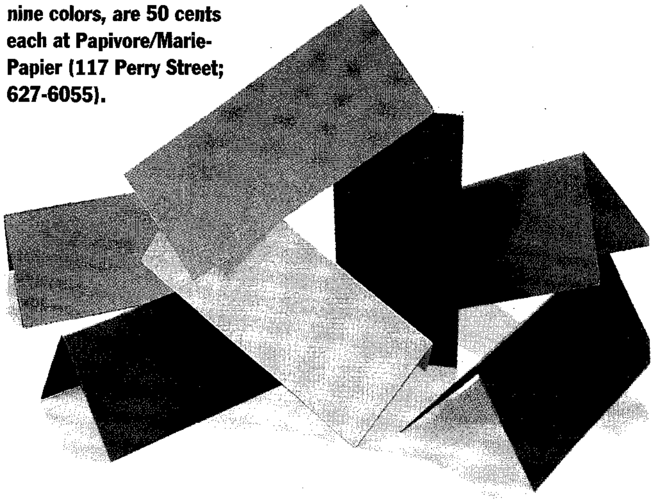
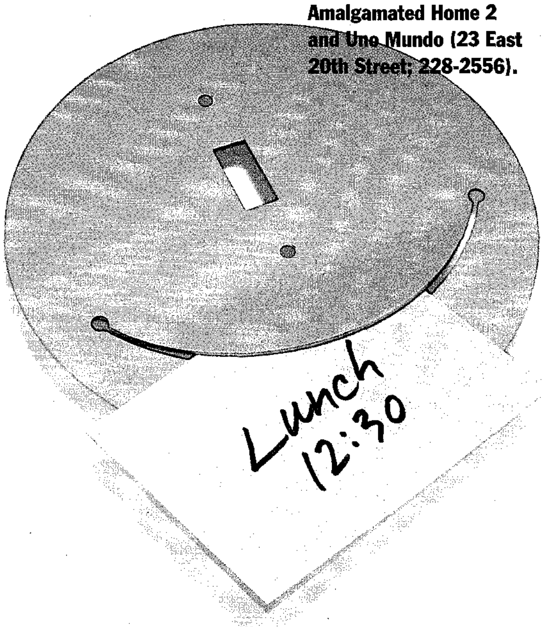


Bombay Duck aluminum curtain and window-shade pulls are $7.50 each at Amalgamated Home 2 (13 Christopher Street; 989-6538).



French place cards, in nine colors, are 50 cents each at Papivore/Marie-Papier (117 Perry Street; 627-6055).

Misto aluminum olive-oil sprayer is $19.95 at Broadway Panhandler (477 Broome Street; 966-3434) and Apartment 48 (48 West 17th Street; 807-1391).



Reason Industries aluminum letter-holder switch-plate cover is about $16.50 at Amalgamated Home 2 and Uno Mundo (23 East 20th Street; 228-2556).

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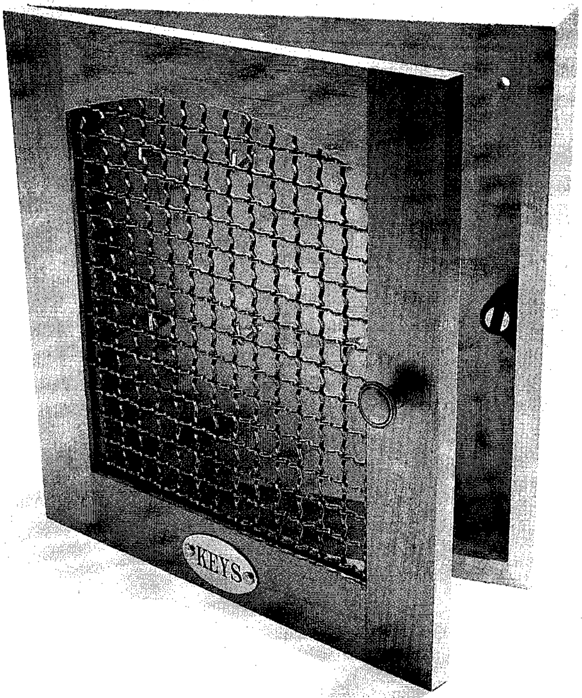

Bartelt Design alder-wood-and-wire key box is $60 at S. Feldman Housewares (1304 Madison Avenue, near 92nd Street; 289-7367).

Old-style wrought-iron square-head nails are $8 for a box of 24; brass trunk nails are $8 for a box of 50 at Shì (233 Elizabeth Street; 334-4330).

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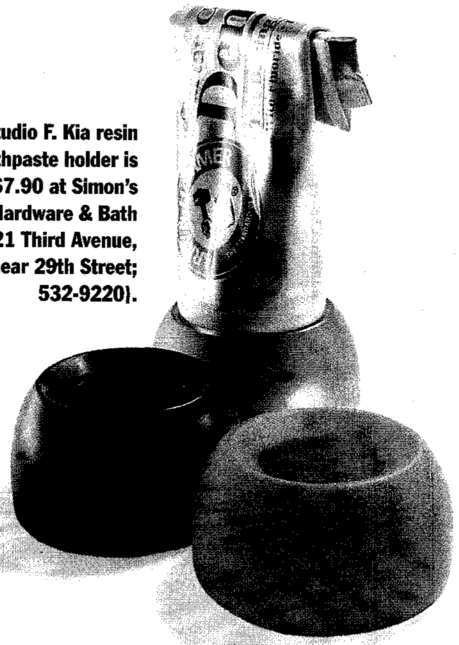

Studio F. Kia resin toothpaste holder is $7.90 at Simon's Hardware & Bath (421 Third Avenue, near 29th Street; 532-9220).

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Shopping finds, **whatever your speed:** *Comfy seating at Montis and a fee-free workout at Revolution Studio.*

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New Amsterdam

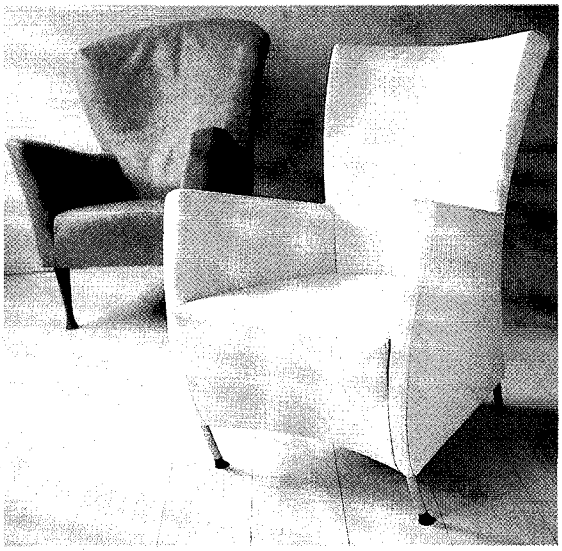
MONTIS—A SLEEK DESIGN firm from Holland—is closing its New York showroom. Lucky for us, because now we can get their funky and versatile furniture for less money. Baku sofa, was $5,595, now $4,199; Soho side table, was $640, now $399; cherrywood dining table with matte glass, was $1,199, now $999. *Montis, New York Design Center, 200 Lexington Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3218); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 12–5; 3/16–3/27.*

Toujours Provence

GALERIE DE PROVENCE—A recent addition to the Upper East Side—is filled with furniture, antiques, and other imports from the region. Hand-painted eighteen-inch vase, was $180, now $135; amber-colored wine cooler, was $100, now $65; handblown vase, was $145, now $99. *Galerie de Provence, 41 E. 60th St. (588-1773); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 12–5; 3/16–3/22.*

On the Wharf

THE TRIPLE PIER EXPO IS ONE OF THE largest semiannual antiques shows in the city. This year—in addition to all of the usual offerings of designer furniture, vintage appliances, paintings, and so on—there's a special spring sale within the show. For example, vintage sunglasses, were $30–$90, now $24–$72



Holland days: Catch the closeout sale at Montis, the Dutch maker of these Dr. Seuss–ish furnishings, before they're all shipped home.

Photographs by Amy Freeth.

(Fabulous Fanny's, Pier 88, April 4 and 5); vintage cuff links, were $50–$60, now $10 (Captain Huch's Booty, Pier 92, April 4 and 5). Admission is $10. *Triple Pier Expo, Piers 88, 90, and 92, Twelfth Ave. bet. 48th and 55th Sts. (call 255-0020 for hours and information); A.E., M.C., V., checks; 3/28–3/29, 4/4–4/5.*

Clear the Decks

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NEW YORK POST

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Young Rascals

'Primary Colors' is funny, raucous, and sometimes raw, but like the novel, Mike Nichols's film sidesteps Bill Clinton's intellectual prowess.

Campaign fever: John Travolta as the would-be president and Adrian Lester as his aide-de-camp in *Primary Colors.*

Photograph by Francois Duhamel/Universal Studios.

Primary Colors IS A PORTRAIT OF A SLOB GENIUS (our president, our obsession, our Bill), a large, groping, hungry animal who just happens to possess the most acute antennae in the history of American politics. Is he a noble beast or an ignoble beast? A fallen angel or an ascending devil? His followers, regarding him with admiration and dismay, puzzle over his nature. This entertaining but rather peculiar movie asks extraordinary questions, and I wish it were better equipped to give the answers. In the end, it gives show-business answers—partial answers—and from an odd angle.

Mike Nichols and his longtime collaborator, Elaine May, adapted Joe Klein's novel, and the movie, like the book, begins with the "meaningful handshake"—the grip firm and confiding, and reinforced by a second hand on the recipient's biceps or shoulder. Was there ever such a handshake? It offers more than a mere greeting; it confirms, reassures, consecrates. In New Hampshire, back there in 1992, Bill Clinton—or Jack Stanton, as Klein calls him—is campaigning for the Democratic nomination, laying his meaty digits into the palms of strangers. As the camera stays close to these epic salutations, a question comes to mind with painful intensity: Does he really care about these people—that is, care more than any other politician seeking votes? Is he simply faking? Or is Stanton's moral nature something fearfully complex, a fathomless mystery in which he acts the role of empathy and concern so superbly that he becomes the thing he wills, much like a cynical grandstanding preacher who whips himself into belief in God? In such a case, sincerity is no longer a matter of honesty; sincerity gets dissolved and reconfigured by will. But a will as strong as that propels us into alarming moral turf, for such a man might act dishonorably with a serene sense of his own innocence. If you then judged him as a liar, you would have to deal with his bafflement. In his eyes, he has been betrayed by *you*.

And that is where we are now. *Primary Colors* was published two years ago, but this film adaptation leaps right into the current moment: The president, who is probably lying, feels righteous and angry, and the rest of us are left in the lurch, hoping to solve (i.e., live with) the conundrum of his character. Bill Clinton drives everyone a little crazy. His heart may be in the right place regarding such key issues as race, education, and jobs, yet his judgment is unspeakably bad in ways that hurt him (and us) again and again. Political columnist Joe Klein, himself an early Clinton fan, lost his faith, and by the time he wrote the book, he was split between outsize admiration and outsize disgust. *Primary Colors* is fueled by a sense of betrayal.

But using that sense of betrayal with dramatic intelligence isn't so easy. Klein's disillusion appears to have been displaced into the character of a rather bland African-American political operative—Henry Burton, the grandson of a civil-rights leader. Burton, who joins Stanton's campaign, is forever worrying about the governor's honor. He narrates both the book and the movie, and he's mostly a blank, a character created in order to be disappointed. Adrian Lester, the young British actor who plays him, has a puzzled, indecisive air—but how could it be any different? He's playing a device, not a man of shrewd or interesting judgment. After all, what intelligent campaign operative—or journalist—could be surprised to discover that politicians lie in order to get elected, that they ruthlessly suppress their past indiscretions? One can be disappointed to find out such things about one's hero—that's only natural—but is there any point in overvaluing one's innocence? What matters in *Macbeth* is not what some minor character thinks of the general. What matters is what *we* think. One of the oddities of *Primary Colors* is that Stanton-Clinton gets lost in his own movie, shunted aside by the agonized scruples of his followers.

The filmmakers, following Klein, portray the president-to-be and his circle as foul-mouthed and sexually active. Sitting there, we cannot help thinking, "This crew will soon take over the country." The thought will shock those who want to be shocked—the Republicans, perhaps, and the umbrageous Maureen Dowd, and also, one imagines,

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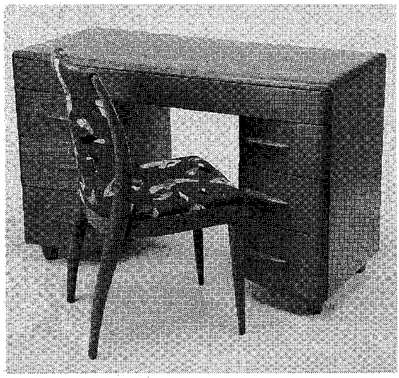

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ABC News, which, in an awesome accession of self-importance, has recently been preparing the president, as far as anyone can see, not merely for an impeachment hearing but for an encounter with Jehovah himself. The movie will provide evidence (of an ambiguous nature) for those who want to think the worst of the Clintons.

The candidate and his wife, Susan (Emma Thompson)—the Hillary figure—are not exactly cooing lovebirds, though they hang together in the nest. Their relationship is scandalously funny, at times pathetic, at times noble. She calls him a "faithless bastard" and whacks him on the head with a heavy set of keys, and he responds by smiling, shrugging off her blows and accusations, and easing her back into the thing she's so very good at, managing his career. They can sustain this odd Punching-bag-and-Judy act because they need each other; together, they are winners.

Thompson doesn't imitate Hillary Clinton; she talks in her own style, ironic and precise, sometimes with great warmth, at other times coldly, with severe anger. Physically, she's hard and linear, while Travolta is all rolling ease, his body swiveling, rocking—he seems to carry ball bearings in every joint. Travolta has certainly got the manner down pat: He thrusts out his jaw and jiggles his head slightly as he speaks; he ambles and shuffles, throwing his arms bearishly around the shoulders of anyone in sight. Travolta is good, but he's like a stage actor in a preview performance. He hasn't taken easy command of the role yet; he hasn't harmonized all the imitative tricks so they seem like the natural manner of a real person. You can always see him acting; the performance is a little clownish and awkward, though it has some wonderful moments—the way he flies into infantile rages when thwarted in some petty way, yet smiles placidly when seriously attacked, refusing to fall into obvious anger. Stanton is a man who understands what American people want: They don't want rancor; they want good humor.

Billy Bob Thornton is entertaining as Richard Jemmons, the James Carville stand-in (though no performer could approach the sheer bravura of Carville himself—the swamp rat with a snake's tongue); Kathy Bates, as the Betsey Wright figure Libby Holden, storms into the movie braying "I'm heeere!" and never stops swinging. Bates is like a pile driver with superb timing; she's mesmerizing. It's Libby's job to cover the governor's tracks (one gets the impression she's kicked a ton of dirt), and she talks tough to him, utterly unafraid, a mama who washes the soiled underclothes and has long lost her tolerance of niceties.

These people are always "on," and they curse a blue streak. Is the portrait accurate? *Primary Colors*

(continued on page 147)

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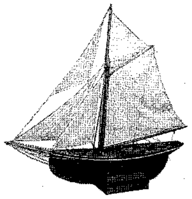

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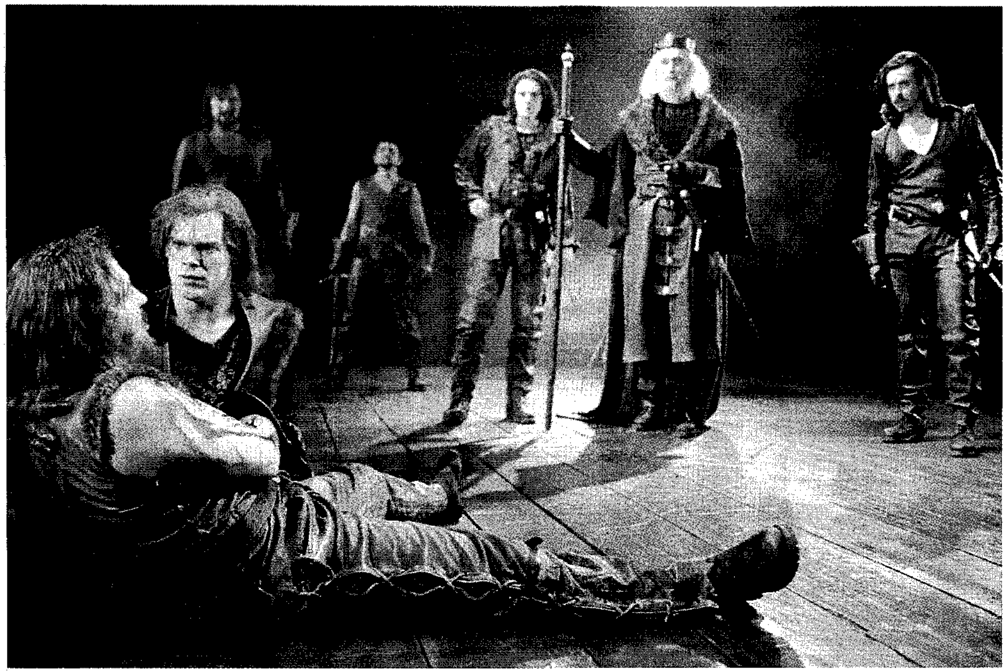
THEATER JOHN SIMON

Highland High Jinx

In the Public Theater's misbegotten production of 'Macbeth,' Alec Baldwin plays the overambitious thane as a slick Wall Street operator.

IRISH ENGLISH, SCOTTISH ENGLISH, WELSH ENGLISH, English English have their several melodies. Only Standard American English is as flat as a tack. Which is why one language Shakespeare does not translate into is American. Not that all the actors in the Public Theater's ill-starred revival of **Macbeth** can manage even decent stage English. What might help a little would be substituting New York every time Scotland occurs in the text: Cawdor and Glamis could then become Harlem and Brooklyn with no harm to the meter—if meter there were.

Delivering poetry is about as alien to the average American actor as speaking, for instance, Oxbridge. There is an art to verse on the stage for which even Hollywood stardom, such as Alec Baldwin's and Angela Bassett's, is not quite sufficient preparation. It must sound simultaneously like poetry and like plausible speech. To be sure, few cast members of this *Macbeth* qualify as anything so competent as the average American actor. Some fall sadly short, others leap grandiosely beyond. George C. Wolfe, the director, clearly believes that multicultural beats specific. Yet just because it is free of all things Scottish, this production should not go scot-free.



Death be not proud: Dan Moran, as the bloody sergeant, reports to Rocco Sisto, as King Duncan.

For starters, take the witches. Of seemingly college age, they might be a trio of students dressed up for Halloween. Since the simplistic staging does not allow for much of a cauldron, Wolfe substitutes a melting pot: one Japanese-American witch, one African-American witch, and one Caucasian witch bedizened for some postgraduate trick-or-treating. Though untalented, they're very cute, but as we know, weird sisterhood is beautiful.

The bloody sergeant's report is delivered by Dan Moran on his back in a kind of machine-made monotone so uninflected that the ear refuses to digest it. The attention is grabbed by Duncan, a king who parades around the battlefield in full throne-room regalia. He is played by Rocco Sisto, whom Wolfe lets louse up three roles plus all the voices of the apparitions, here portrayed by kewpie dolls.

Sisto's Duncan sounds and behaves, in a desperate attempt at old age, like those kids playing the wise men in the grade-school Christmas pageant. Later, he returns as a big clod whom the program labels "a Scottish doctor," even as it designates others as "Scottish thanes," no doubt to distinguish them from Sicilian or Jamaican ones. Nathan Hinton plays one of these "Scottish thanes," Ross, with no other perceptible qualifications than a fine set of dreadlocks.

Alec Baldwin would be a good Macbeth if Macbeth were a contemporary slick American operator in a Hollywood thriller. He gives you the great "Tomorrow and tomorrow" soliloquy with the same ardor and eloquence with which your TV weatherman predicts tomorrow's temperature. As Lady M., Angela Bassett looks stunning, and is blameless until she opens her mouth. (Some of the others, like Jeffrey Nordling's S-shaped Macduff, need not even speak to sink.) Unfortunately, nothing she does or says is as memorable as her Bride of Frankenstein hairdo, on which a crown sits like a bagel on a haystack.

The hair design, by Jeffrey Frank, may be the production's cynosure. These Scottish thanes and English generals and sons come, like dachshunds, in short-haired and long-haired varieties. The contrast being so striking between, say, the girlishly golden locks of the otherwise undistinguished Malcolm (Michael Hall) and Baldwin's trimly barbered Macbeth, you suspect hidden meanings. Is short hair evil, long hair good? Is one Scottish, the other English? Is one for the thane, the other for the inthane? Though rhyme is heard at times, reason is nowhere.

As director, Wolfe concentrates on the following, in order of importance. First, light effects (by Scott Zielinski). Perhaps as an insight into the Scottish climate, there is paroxistic lightning and thunder all over the place—unless, of course, medieval Scotland was poorly wired

Photograph by Michal Daniel.

and prone to short circuits. Next, the original music (by Carlos Valdez), consisting almost solely of interminable drum rolls, possibly spelling out the play's meaning to the hearing-impaired. Next, the costumes (by Toni-Leslie James), strictly subfusc, registering against Riccardo Hernández's brown set as murk on murk.

Next, a few realistic, modern touches. While Banquo (Liev Schreiber) is orating, just overhead a servant on his knees is scrubbing a bridge. When the sleepwalking Lady Macbeth speaks out self-incriminatingly, the Doctor declares "I will set down what comes from her," and promptly pulls out a pencil and journalist's pad. But there is anti-realism, too. Marching on Dunsinane, the invaders wear not one sprig of Birnam Wood. Macbeth's buckling on his armor consists of said servant's strapping one cloth legging on his master's left shin. Seyton, standing high above Macbeth, wears a shoulder-length black veil; removing it, he turns into Banquo's ghost. The aforementioned servant is Macbeth's entire army, making Macbeth a true superman. Other directors have the knack of making a small cast convey multitudes. With the opposite talent, Wolfe turns eighteen into a mightless handful.

The rudimentary décor, an *hommage* to the old Globe, does feature a large, tilted, overhanging mirror. Its presence presages an orgiastic sex scene for the Macbeths, but, disappointingly, serves only for the ghost to appear in—scant work for such a huge rising and descending prop. No less unusual are some line readings, as when Macbeth pauses at "the sere . . . and yellow leaf," as if *yellow* were an afterthought to help audiences unfamiliar with *sere*. The truest lines are spoken by the Rastafarian Ross: "I have words / That would be howl'd out in the desert air, / Where hearing should not latch them." Few, if any, here have words of any other kind.

SURPRISINGLY, THE ACCIDENT-PRONE PREMISES of Classic Stage Company now house the non-CSC production of Warren Leight's enjoyable **Side Man.** It is about sidemen, yesteryear's second-tier jazz musicians who hired out as supplementary players to various bands, and about their women. It is narrated by Clifford, the son of Gene, a trumpet player, and Terry, a sweet thing turned bitter. As the play moves from 1985 to 1953 and back, we hear about his parents' courtship, his birth, and the parents' growing estrangement as he grows up. We also get glimpses of the lives of Gene's fellow sidemen, Al, Ziggy, and Jonesy, and the waitress who beds or marries some of them. As things move near-imperceptibly from comedy to drama, we relish the jive, the jokes, the frustrations enacted by seven solid actors in a fine production neatly tied together by Michael Mayer's apt direction. ■

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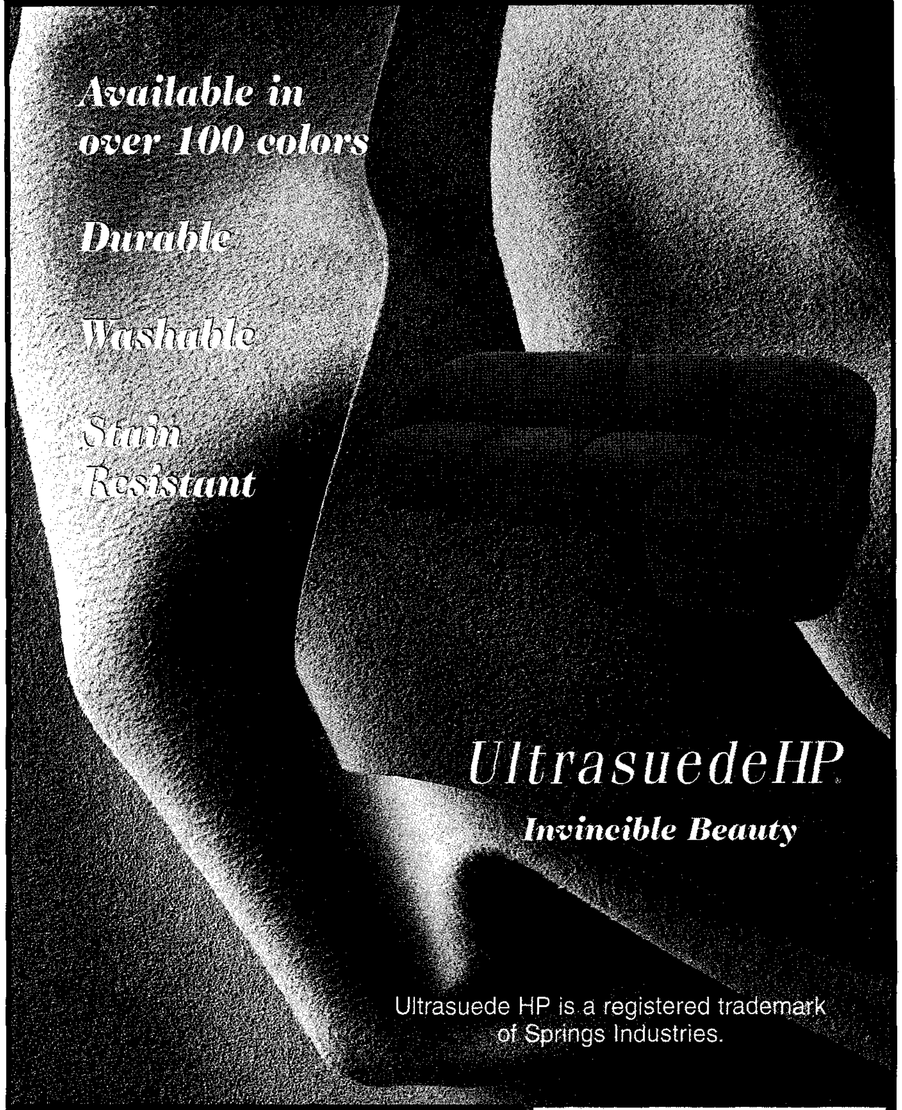

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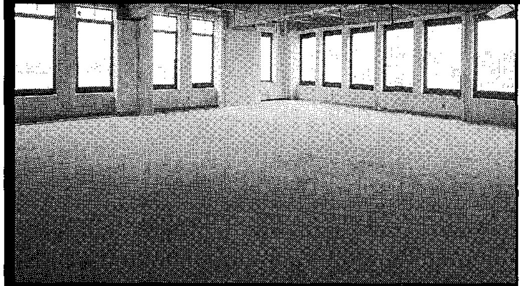

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DANCE TOBI TOBIAS

Dance *Noir*

Paul Taylor's smoky 'Piazzolla Caldera' pulses with the sleek, dark eroticism of tango; Doug Varone's 'Bel Canto' is laugh-out-loud funny.

IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, **Paul Taylor** HAS CREATED some marvelous entertainments to engage today's audience—lively, colorful excursions that give the viewer a swell time without demanding much ruminative thought or deep feeling in return. The most beguiling of these (let's call them) serious pop works to date is the 1991 *Company B,* set to tunes of the Andrews Sisters. During the Taylor company's recent New York run at City Center, the local premiere of *Piazzolla Caldera*—to a medley of tango music by the popular composer—revealed a hit in the same class.

It's set in the tango dive of our imagination: Lightbulbs swing from the ceiling in front of a blood-and-smoke-stained backdrop. Santo Loquasto, the set's designer, has outdone himself with the costumes. He's put the seven men in varied takes on the thuggish sexiness of dark, form-flaunting trousers and muscle-revealing tops and given the five women sheer, darkly flowered dresses that fly up as the night creatures whirl to reveal triangles of flesh where the tops of black stockings provocatively fail to meet shiny black bikini panties. With only occasional quotes from conventional tango vocabulary, the choreography elaborates upon the genre's theme of a dangerous eroticism that encourages passionate love and sudden death.

Taylor's ingeniousness is visible everywhere in this dance: It's in the manipulation of odd numbers, so that when the obligatory male-female face-off yields to couple dancing, two guys are paired and given a sensational duet of their own. (This is both the out-of-the-closet statement Taylor has largely avoided and a reference to the history of the tango, which includes men frankly dancing body to body.) Taylor's sheer, subtle know-how is evident, too, in the suggestion of plot that threads through the piece, so that a solo for a woman anguished by her lack of a mate is suddenly recalled at the end of the piece, as she falls dead (a suicide, one assumes) at the feet of a throng exulting in the climax of its orgy. As usual, Taylor maintains his chosen atmosphere faultlessly; you can't imagine a single move in *Piazzolla Caldera* happening in daylight; every last bit of this dance belongs to the sultry dark.

If you've ever wondered about the inner workings of cults, Taylor—a longtime connoisseur of the macabre—spells the matter out in vivid dance terms with *The Word,* given its world premiere in the New York season. Set to a made-to-order score by David Israel, the piece presents a sect of eleven men and women, brilliantly clad alike by Loquasto in white dress shirts, striped ties, and suspendered knickers—a weird take on British public-school-boy garb. (The women's hair, slicked back into boyish dos, and the men's mouths, as blatantly lipsticked as a drag queen's, put the final touch on the perversity of this uniform.)

The members of the group, which might be either political or religious, take turns—almost randomly, it would seem—at being hysterical, demagogic leader and brainwashed follower. The chief of the moment, a caricature of megalomaniac power, is repeatedly mounted on the shoulders of his acolytes; from this position he gesticulates furiously with his arms and contorts his face as if screaming orders, epithets, dire prophesies. His disciples (or conscripts) shuttle between the mechanical maneuvers of automatons and the writhing of souls co-opted by evil who retain just enough moral awareness to feel self-loathing.

In showing us this much, Taylor is objectively describing a dismaying aspect of human social behavior. But as if to probe further the question of whether the individual has the power to resist mob thinking, he introduces a demon: That fast and furious mover Lisa Viola, dressed as a green ser-

It takes more than two to: Taylor's sultry tangoists, in Santo Loquasto's dreamy dance demimonde.

Photograph by Beatriz Schiller.

pent, periodically appears to whip up the action, indicating that herdlike, wicked aberration is predestined, inevitable.

Though a handsome piece of craftsmanship, *The Word* isn't Taylor's most effective exploration of psychic madness. *Speaking in Tongues* and, especially, *Last Look* are more potent. For all the grotesque frenzy of its individual moves, *The Word* is too calmly ordered and too predictable to suck you in or sweep you away. And that snake is too Disneyish to take seriously—or is the ever-wry Taylor being ironic and using this figure to mock villains and weaklings who refuse responsibility for the harm they wreak, claiming, "The devil made me do it"?

WHILE MANY POSTMODERN CHOREOGRAPHERS trade cannily on shock and chic, **Doug Varone** is all sincerity and substance. Until now, his main flaw seemed to be narrowness—of vocabulary, of subject matter, of tone. But with his most recent New York showing, at the Joyce last month, he broke through some of his familiar barriers.

The most striking evidence of Varone's claiming new territory lies in *Bel Canto,* given its world premiere in the Joyce engagement. Varone is typically contemplative and bleak, but this group dance is exuberant and funny—laugh-out-loud funny—though in no way superficial. Set to florid music from Bellini's *Norma,* it manages to do just what Mark Morris can do with a score that's both justly famous and in some way extravagant to the contemporary listener: It admits the absurdity we can't avoid hearing in the music now and, at the very same time, confesses how much the susceptible adore it. At the heart of the piece lie two male duets—for Larry Hahn and Eddie Taketa, David Neumann and Varone, each man an idiosyncratic and marvelous performer. Their material is, essentially, love: love's unquenchable ebullience, its extravagances and embarrassments. And despite its fond mockery of, among other things, the performance conventions coloratura singing engenders, the latter duet is arguably one of the most touching homoerotic passages in the contemporary dance repertory.

Knave, Varone's new extended solo for himself, has more physical agitation than cogent meaning. But the 1988 *Home,* which he danced with Gwen Welliver, a lovely earth-mother type, sums up all that's best in the sorrow-tinged humanism of his earlier work. More a series of gestures and postures than a flowing dance to its music, a string quartet by A. Leroy, it depicts a marriage that has outlived all its youthful passions yet—sustained by familiarity, apathy, resignation, and memory of old desires—refuses to die. ■

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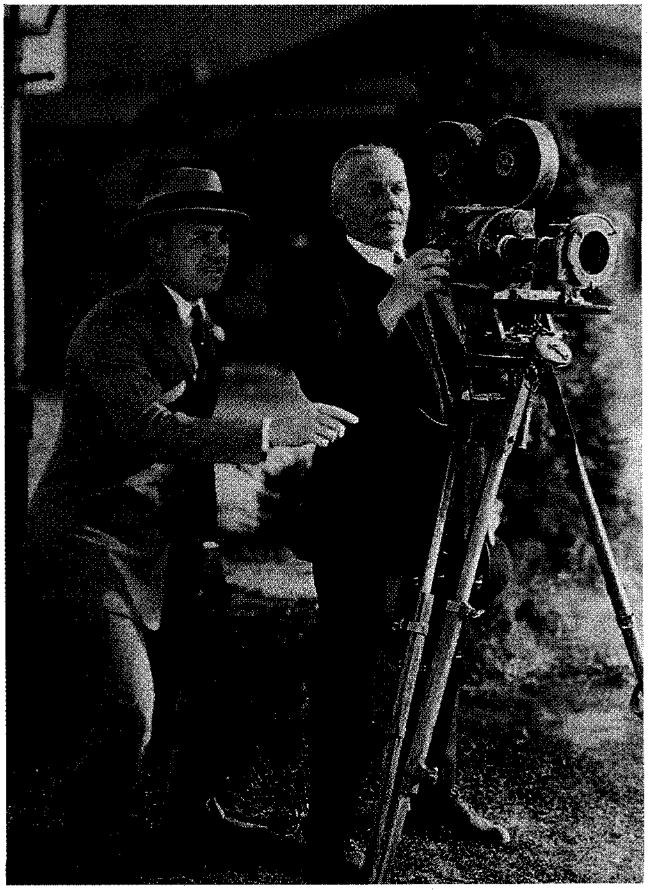
TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

It Came From Minsk

Just in time for Oscar, A&E's provocative, engaging 'Hollywoodism: Jews, Movies and the American Dream' tells the ultimate arrivistes' tale.

FROM NEAL GABLER'S BRILLIANT AND BRISTLING best-seller *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood* (1988) the Canadian filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici has made an equally impressive documentary, **Hollywoodism: Jews, Movies and the American Dream** (Sunday, March 22; 9 to 11 P.M.; A&E), guaranteed to raise both consciousness and hackles the night before we put on scuba suits to go into the tank for a deluge of *Titanic* Oscars. The men who built the studios that made the movies that created our popular culture would have been in steerage rather than tuxedos on the original *Titanic.* Each was an Eastern European émigré. It's Gabler's thesis that the Hollywood of Harry Cohn (Columbia), William Fox (20th Century Fox), Carl Laemmle (Universal), Louis Mayer (MGM), Jack Warner (Warner Bros.), and Adolph Zukor (Paramount) "was a dream, dreamt by Jews, fleeing a nightmare." As they reinvented themselves in the "raw social environment" of the Far West—"from Poland to polo in a single generation" was the joke—these moguls also reinvented the way the rest of us pictured ourselves. Their big-screen images of an over-the-rainbow "shadow America"—of strong fathers, supportive mothers, rebellious sons, the common man, the picket fence, integration, assimilation, Andy Hardy, Gary Cooper, and Jimmy Stewart—"devoured" what we had previously thought was real. And Gabler further suggests that it all fell apart when HUAC came to town like the Cossacks on a pogrom.

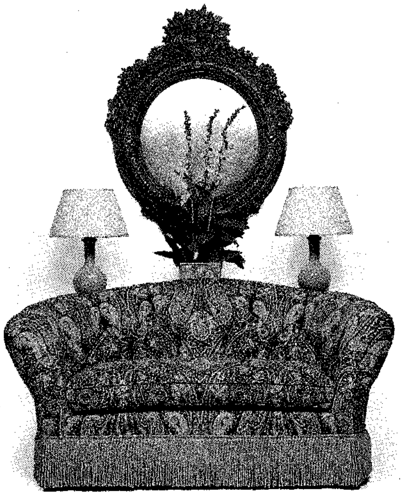


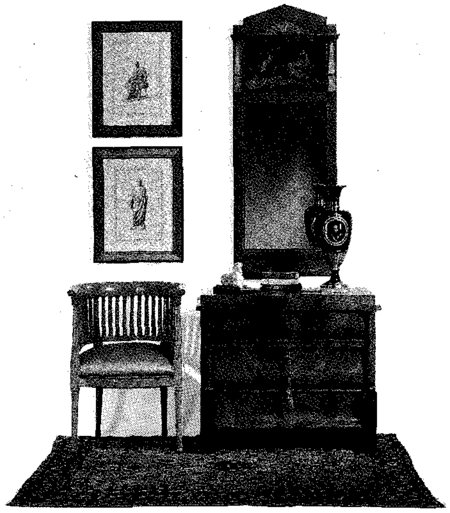
A talent for re-invention: Warner brother Jack with father Benjamin at work in 1933.

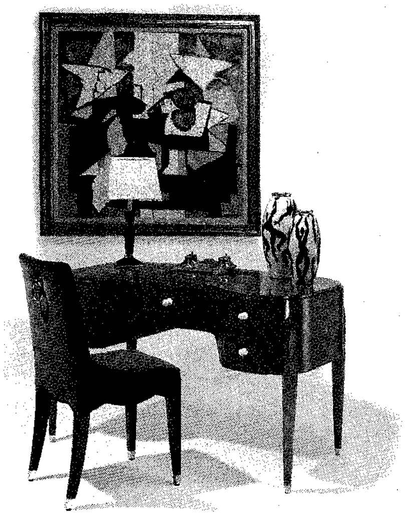
Photograph from MPTV.

This rich material is superbly served by talking heads (J. Hoberman, Bernard Avishai, Hasia Diner, Thomas Cripps, Aljean Harmetz, Jonathan Rosenbaum, and Gabler himself) with provocative things to say, and who say them sharply. Also by pointed juxtapositions of archival material (the nineteenth-century migrations, Eastern Seaboard tenement life, the "golden shtetl" of Los Angeles) with snippets from the film-fantasy factory line, often in witty montage; and by apposite references, between promiscuous generalizations, to a range of cinematic images, from the pre-Jewish film world of a pro-Klan *Birth of a Nation* all the way up to a self-consciously satirical *Barton Fink.* Before they became moguls, the men who made Hollywood had been clothiers, merchants, traders in diamonds and fox stoles, yard-goods and dry-goods salesmen. They got into the movie-theater business in pre–World War I New York City and Chicago because, as one grandchild tells the camera, "people paid the money before they got the goods!" Dissatisfied with buying the film product of a Protestant elite that would later try to shut them out of the motion-picture industry as they'd been shut out of Russia, Poland, Hungary, and Harvard, they started to make their own films—which were, in a way, psychic yard goods.

Hollywoodism is a deep and sympathetic reading of any movie that ever embodied even the vaguest notion of the loner, the loser, the little guy against the system, the misunderstood and/or despised outsider. No wonder the first talkie was *The Jazz Singer,* with Al Jolson as the cantor's son. Metaphorically, King Kong was also Jewish, and so was Superman—a mild-mannered, glasses-wearing intellectual on the Clark Kent outside but a Man of Steel in the closet, forced to keep his true identity a secret. A Western like *The Kansan* could be read as a parable about the slaughter of the innocents. And *Show Boat,* in which Ava Gardner as Julie pretended to be a black woman trying to pass as a white woman, spoke in code of the needs and fears of social outcasts wanting to belong. The movie musicals were based, of course, on Broadway musicals, most of them written by Jewish composers, if often, like Jolson's blackface singer, borrowing the blues. (That Irving Berlin should have given us not only "White Christmas" and "Easter Parade"







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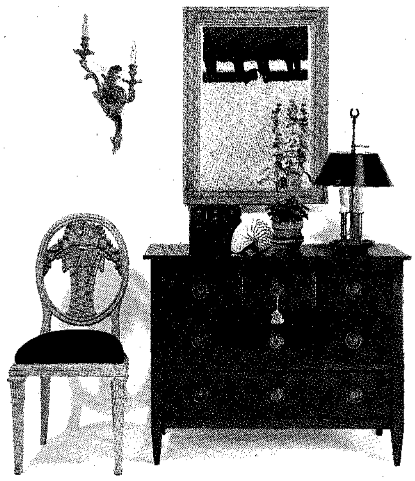

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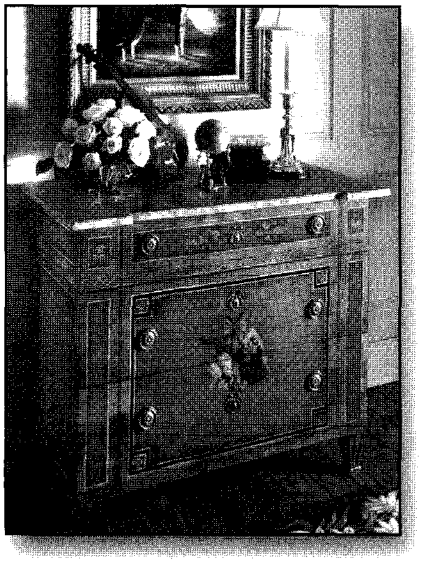

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but also "God Bless America" says something sadly Scott Fitzgerald–like about the fatal desire to please.)

The continuing drama of Jewish Hollywood was an upward mobilizing of prole moxie to middle-class values and small-town mythos, from *The Grapes of Wrath* to *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. Somehow it all ends up as *A Star Is Born*, whether the screenplay is by Dorothy Parker (1937), Moss Hart (1954), or Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne (1976). The drama darkens, of course, John Rankin and J. Parnell Thomas ride into the golden shtetl to accuse them, with their swimming pools and yachts and second, younger, gentile trophy wives, of un-Americanism. Suddenly, instead of blackface, blacklists.

We are so accustomed to meretricious cultural studies that when the real thing comes along, generous and suggestive, we may fail to see how many windows and veins it opens. In Stanley Elkin's finest novel, *The Franchiser* (1976), he might well have been writing about Hollywood when he invented Ben Flesh. From his godfather, Julius Finsberg, who made a fortune designing costumes for musical comedies, Flesh inherits not money but the use of it. He can borrow at the prime rate up to the value of the Finsberg estate, which he does—to buy other men's names, especially those that have been franchised, like Arthur Treacher, H&R Block, Dr Pepper, One-Hour Martinizing, and Jacuzzi Whirlpool. This, too, is a parable of assimilation. Of what does the melting pot consist? Campbell's soup, Kraft cheese, Kool-Aid. All the little yogurt cultures have been turned into one big Mister Softee. And which dreams does Willy Loman sell? "I come from Fred Astaire, everybody dance!"

But in such a musical comedy, after the immigrants have shortened their names, the Jews changed them, the slaves borrowed new ones from their masters, we are diminished. Tailored to the specifications of a culture that wanted someone else, we stick out at the wrists, our shoulders are wrong, we have to be taken in at the back or tucked in at the nose. Eating at McDonald's, sleeping in a Marriott, we are strangers in a golden whatever. Distend the metaphor to include another remarkable novel like Mordecai Richler's *Solomon Gursky Was Here* (1990), and we get these last words, in block letters on a postcard to Moses from Solomon in Hanoi: LOOK AT IT THIS WAY. THE SYSTEM WAS INSPIRED, BUT IT IS MAN THAT IS VILE. IT WON'T WORK. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. THE MANIFESTO. THE WORLD CONTINUES TO PAY A PUNISHING TOLL FOR OUR JEWISH DREAMERS.

Hollywoodism argues there has never been a medium better suited than the movies to express the fluidity of self-creation, the trading of futures on an identity exchange. And even so . . .

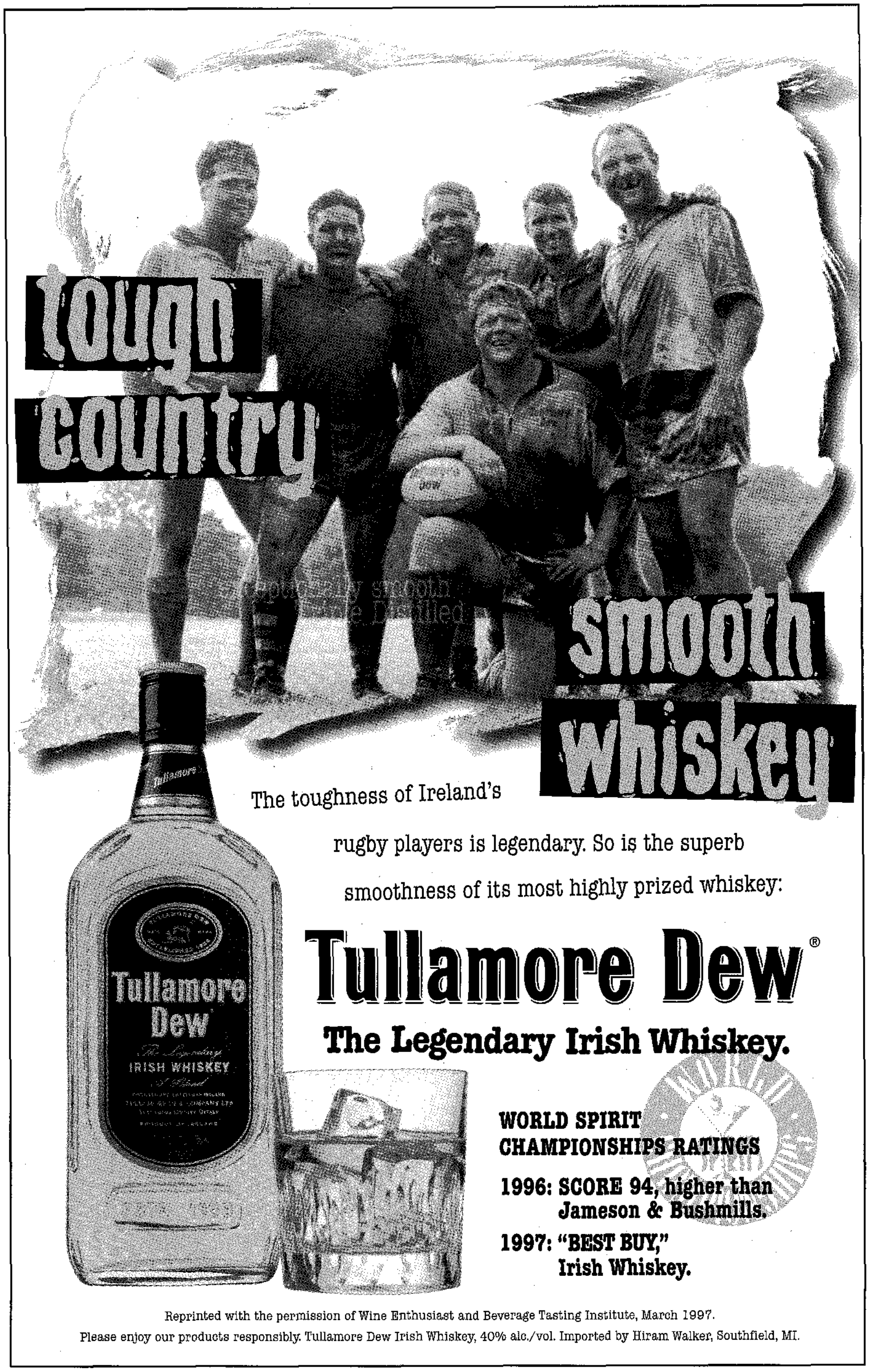
WHEN WE FIRST MEET SOCRATES FORTLOW (Laurence Fishburne), he's pushing a shopping cart through South Central Los Angeles, which looks something like Beirut after the latest holy war, collecting bottles and cans to redeem at the local supermarket, where he'd really rather box groceries. Socrates is an ex-con who did hard time for murder and rape. Violence is the very air he breathes, and he's choking. At the local diner, he won't ask Natalie Cole out on a date because he doesn't have a job. He is too unsavory to be welcome at Cicely Tyson's boarding house, where his best friend, Bill Cobbs, is dying of cancer. "Hungry, horny, and *how come?*—they all my friends, my best friends," Socrates tells a little boy who witnessed a murder and is hiding out with him. Meanwhile, he is gluing new legs on an old table to help repair a broken marriage. Socrates is a fixer.

He is also, in **Always Outnumbered** (Saturday, March 21; 9 to 11 P.M.; HBO), a nineties incarnation of Easy Rawlins, the fifties fixer who solves cases, saves children, and buys buildings in Walter Mosley's series of mysteries about Watts. In the collection of related short stories that Mosley himself has adapted for this cable-television movie, Socrates will likewise save a child, and that marriage, and maybe even a broken neighborhood, besides easing the exit of Cobbs with morphine and fixing himself like a table. Between flashbacks to his days of rage, Socrates will become a hero.

Fishburne stands up well under the weight of all this symbolism. He is abetted in his dialogue with corrupted Platonic ideals by a crafty Cobbs, an exasperated Cole, a super-respectable Tyson, and Bill Nunn and Laurie Metcalf.

South Central, which is what has become of Watts, is seen by director Michael Apted as if it's what these people are stuck with instead of a guided tour through an alien hell. If *Always Outnumbered* veers sometimes alarmingly between Porgy Touched by an Angel and Superfly Meets the Equalizer, Fishburne is always there to fix that, too. And so what we are watching is community.

LASTLY: **Damon** (MARCH 22; 8:30 to 9 P.M.; Fox) stars the very gifted Damon Wayans in a preview of a new Fox sitcom that combines the worst of such old Fox entries as *In Living Color* and *Married . . . With Children.* The talent can't seem to find anything better to do than make anatomy jokes. Wayans plays an undercover cop, David Alan Grier plays his needy brother Bernard, Andrea Martin's an over-the-top precinct boss, and they all busy themselves in the first two episodes ridiculing sexual-harassment laws and dressing up as jive-talking pimps. Not since the late, unlamented Bochco debacle *Public Morals* have so many talented people wasted so much of their—and our—time. ■



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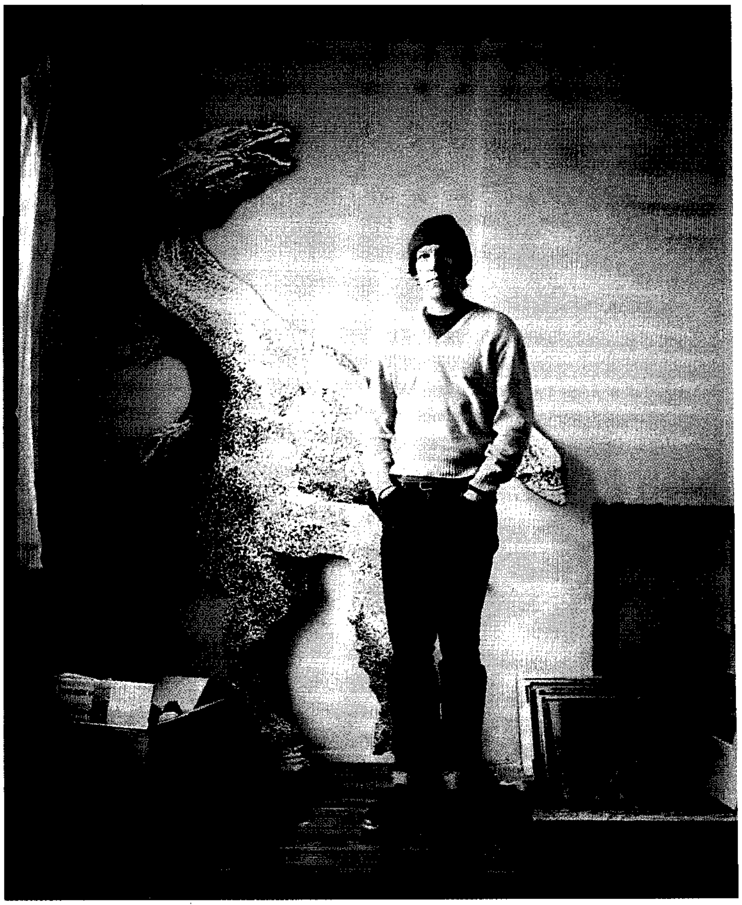
POP MUSIC ETHAN SMITH

L.A. Consequential

Brooklyn folkie Elliott Smith wrote a song for 'Good Will Hunting.' Now he's playing an unlikely stage—the Oscars.



Smith: "I was a big chicken about playing the kind of music that I really liked."

Photograph by Danny Clinch.

HUNCHED OVER HIS ACOUSTIC GUITAR in a shabby Los Angeles nightclub, **Elliott Smith** hardly looks like Hollywood's newest sensation. But tonight he's playing his first gig since he received a best-song Oscar nomination for "Miss Misery"—one of the five delicate, folk-pop mood-setters he contributed to the *Good Will Hunting* soundtrack—and the industry is out in force. Make that *industries,* plural: Smith, 28, has just signed with DreamWorks records, and the VIP list at the door is equally laden with music-biz players and Miramax heavies. The high suit count inside Spaceland—more than half the club's capacity—creates a long line of displaced normal fans out on the sidewalk. Minnie Driver, who's also up for an Oscar for her role in Gus Van Sant's janitor-savant blockbuster, is standing near the stage; Ben Stiller lingers farther back in the stylishly dressed crowd.

As soon as Smith begins his first song, 1995's faintly twanging "Clementine," the audience goes from schmoozing and glad-handing to rapt, neck-craning attention. As he does at most shows, Smith plays sitting in a small, hard-backed chair. He's wearing a lived-in Willie Nelson T-shirt and blue jeans that look a size too small; a shaggy fringe of dyed black hair peeks out from under his dirty wool cap. Barely looking at the audience, Smith delivers the characteristically dark-hued ballad in a voice just above a whisper. "They're waking you up to close the bar," he sings. "The street's wet, you can tell by the sound of the cars." He strums the guitar with a quiet, deft restlessness. Smith's shyness makes him an intriguing performer: Being onstage is clearly an ordeal for him; he's not up there to bask in the spotlight.

For the next hour and a half, the audience remains dumbstruck, breaking its silence only to shout a request for one of his nuanced meditations on alienation, self-doubt, and heartbreak. Smith's next L.A. show will be a one-song appearance during the Academy Awards ceremony, March 23. Also on the bill: Celine Dion, Trisha Yearwood, and Michael Bolton.

THE DAY AFTER THE CLUB DATE, SMITH IS STANDING IN LINE at a Starbucks on Sunset Boulevard. He looks at the blonde woman in front of him, her sculpted body covered in Lycra. "This neighborhood," he says drily, "is a little too athletic for me." He's substituted a pair of stainless-steel aviator shades for the stocking cap, but otherwise he's wearing the same clothes he played in last night. (Six days later, performing "Miss Misery"—which he's taken to calling "that Oscar song"—on *MTV Live,* he's still in the same outfit.)

"I read in a newspaper the other day that Gus discovered me a year ago, playing in a coffee house," Smith says, furrowing his brow in the midday sun. "Which is ridiculous." Indeed, Smith wasn't "discovered"—by Van Sant or anyone else. Born in Dallas, the taciturn singer spent several years on the aggressively indie Portland, Oregon, scene—releasing albums both as a solo artist and as a member of the now-defunct Heatmiser (a noisy post-punk band he refers to as "kind of a disaster")—and earning a small, intense following. "I was a big chicken about playing the kind of music that I really liked for a really long time," he admits, describing the years he spent hoarding his best songs on a tape recorder in his bedroom. "I was too uptight—just because other people weren't doing it."

Van Sant, who lives in Portland, started coming to Smith's shows a couple of years ago, after a friend gave him a copy of the singer's first album, *Roman Candle.* "My old boyfriend D.J. worked with Elliott's girlfriend at the time," says Van Sant, who himself is up for a best-director nod for the movie. "So I'd met him a couple of times. When I was filming *Good Will Hunting* I was listening to his music, and it occurred to me that it would be good in the film, so I asked him if I could use some of his songs." ("Miss Misery" is the only song Smith composed specifically for the movie; the rest were culled from his three indie-label releases.) Driver is less reserved in her assessment of the music's role in *Good Will Hunting.* "It's literally the most important thing in the film," she gushes. "Elliott is like a character you can't see. I can only compare the way his music works in the movie to Simon & Garfunkel's songs in *The Graduate.*"

Driver's not the first person to make the observation. "I'm kind of sensitive about the Simon & Garfunkel comparison," Smith says warily. "When I first started playing in the part of the country I was in, it was all grunge, or post-grunge, or whatever you want to call it. If you played acoustic music by yourself, then it was like, 'Ah, you sound like Simon & Garfunkel!' "

"Elliott just hates this," chuckles Van Sant, "but it *does* sound to me like Simon & Garfunkel. I don't think he has that in mind—it just so happens, you know?"

But there's a lot more of John Lennon's pensive melodicism than Paul Simon's simpering folkie affectation in Smith's music. Even his guitar playing has a kind of orchestral sensibility, as if he's hearing several different groups of musicians in his head, and letting listeners hear snatches of each in his strumming. "Nobody can escape it," he says, acknowledging the Beatles' influence. "But they *are* my favorite band."

THESE DAYS, SMITH LIVES IN BROOKLYN. ("I don't know," he says, when asked what drew him to New York. "It just seemed like something to do.") He's been in L.A. for more than a month, recording his first album for DreamWorks, and he plans to stay there until the Oscars. His last record, *Either/Or,* shared a title—and some themes—with Søren Kierkegaard's lengthy meditation on aesthetics and ethics. "I wasn't trying to be pretentious," he says matter-of-factly. "It was on my mind for the whole year I was writing the record, the idea about the responsible person versus the beautiful person."

There'll certainly be no shortage of beautiful people come Monday night. "I'm probably gonna do whatever they have in mind," he says of his award-show performance. "I've decided to look at the whole Oscar thing as one big, happily freakish accident." ■

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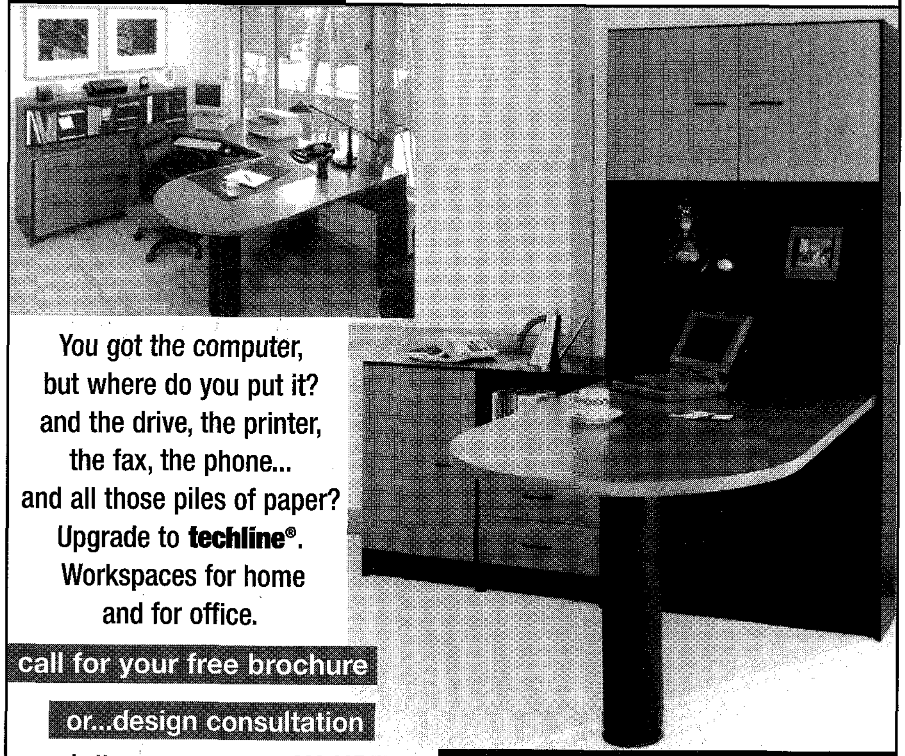

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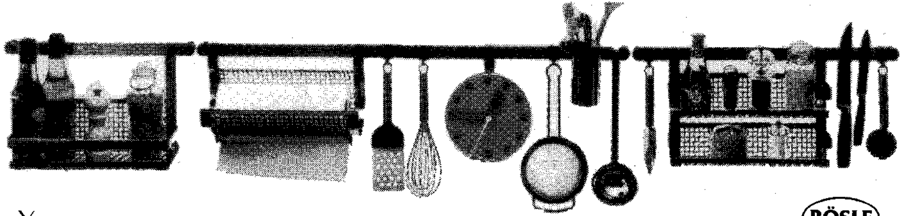

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Good Grill Hunting

The theater district's Chimichurri Grill offers an Argentine menu that doesn't just phone it in; the art of empanadas at Patagonia Cafe.

AMONG THE GASTRONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS OF MY life is a streamside *asado,* or barbecue, along the Chimehuin River in Argentina. After a morning of fly-fishing, I enjoyed a charred sirloin, sliced summer tomatoes, and fried potatoes, all washed down with a bottle of dry Cabernet from the north-central province of Mendoza. No sooner had I finished one steak than I asked my fishing guide to grill me another, which I consumed as quickly as the first.

Until the recent opening of **Chimichurri Grill** (606 Ninth Avenue, at 43rd Street; 586-8655), New Yorkers have had to content themselves with Argentine restaurants that serve food as tired as a dime-a-dance tango partner on Sunday morning. Chimichurri Grill, though just two weeks old, has the snappy command of its staff, menu, and atmosphere that one expects in a restaurant that's had more time to hit its stride.

Credit this coordination to the vision and skill of owner and chef Jorge Rodriguez, a native of Buenos Aires who has worked with Gato Dumas, the Argentine Paul Bocuse. Rodriguez, who has the heart of a maître d' beating underneath his chef's tunic, shares front-of-the-house responsibilities with his wife, Alicia, and works at the stove alongside Carlos Benavides, a former executive chef at the Italian favorite i Trulli.

An Argentine restaurant typically displays a lot of wood, equestrian prints, and enough spurs, crops, and whips to stock a leather bar. Chimichurri forgoes the gaucho incunabula but does have a pretty back wall composed of dovetailed hardwoods. Small black-and-white photos, circa late Evita, accent walls dominated by two gilt-edged mirrors. Venetian blinds with thick wooden slats lend a warm if slightly *noir*ish feel to the room.

Rodriguez experiments with ingredients that add freshness and complexity of flavor to the fundamentally hearty Argentine menu. The matambre con rusa features thick slices of cold, rolled veal filled with herbs. The accompanying salad of potatoes, carrots, and peas is dressed with a fresh-tarragon mayonnaise and a squirt of white-truffle oil that transforms the often-uninspired appetizer into a flavor-infused arrangement of ingredients.

Many Argentine restaurants betray their country's Italian heritage with menu offerings like tallarines, a fettuccine-like pasta. As his mother taught him to, Rodriguez rolls his with the leftover spinach-and-herb filling of his ravioli. The resulting green pasta is then served with a substantial tomato-and-chicken ragu. And the ravioli themselves? Quite nice, when filled with spinach and ricotta—but not as good, I imagine, as the simmered-calf-brains-and-spinach ravioli Rodriguez tells me his mother prepares back in Buenos Aires.

The section marked DE LA PARILLA, or "from the grill," is the heart of the menu, and no dish is more typical of Argentina than the asado de tira, or grilled ribs. This meat is one we Anglos distrust unless it's boiled to the point of decomposition. I actually like it that way, but there is something more quintessentially meaty about this Argentine plate of three grilled short ribs, in their salty, chewy glory. For those who think all beef must be tender, this dish is an eye- (or at least a mouth-) opener.

The bife angosto is a perfectly done black-and-blue shell steak. The meatiness is nicely cut by chimichurri sauce, a purée of oregano, parsley, vinegar, garlic, olive oil, and, in this restaurant's version, roasted sweet pepper. Any Argentine chef will be happy to turn over its exact proportions just as soon as he's been delivered the recipes for Coca-Cola and McDonald's special sauce.

Magret duck breast came medium-rare and was dressed with a perfumed infusion of thyme, a delicate combination brought back to earth by a side of mashed

Don't fry for me: *Noir*ish chic at Chimichurri Grill on Ninth Avenue.

Photograph by Robert Wright.

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New York

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Photograph by David Riley

batata, the white sweet potato of Patagonia. The only false note among the entrées was a skirt steak that I found a bit liverish.

Among the desserts, I found a good mil hojas, essentially a mille-feuille only less delicately prepared. Even the French, however, cannot improve on the panqueques de manzana (apple pancakes), buttery caramelized crêpes with sweet apple slices.

Chimichurri is a new restaurant with promise. Don't keep your distance.

Chimichurri Grill is open Monday through Saturday. Lunch, noon to 3. Dinner, Monday through Thursday 5:30 to 11, Friday and Saturday till 11:30. Wine and beer license pending. A.E., M.C., V.

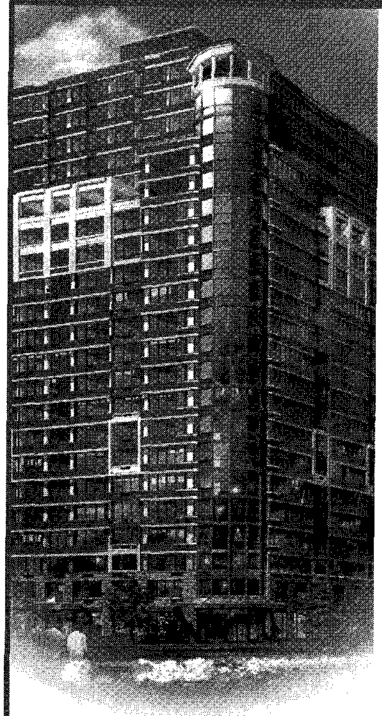
THE UNDERGROUND GOURMET

MY RECENT ARGENTINE JAG STARTED WHEN Juan Pablo Vincente, the *porteño* (Buenos Aires native) maître d' at Osteria Del Circo, told me where I could find the best empanadas in town. I have always considered them an undistinguished nosh that didn't allow for levels of good and great, but since Vincente is a reliable gourmand, I trooped over to the sprightly **Patagonia Cafe** (1151 Second Avenue, at 60th Street; 751-6836). There, cook Alejandro Pellicari and his partner, Patricio Destuet, serve forth baked meat-, cheese-, herb-, and vegetable-filled pastries that have about as much in common with the average fried empanada as pork rind has with a fine prosciutto.

Pellicari hails from Mendoza, but for his beef empanadas makes a concession to Buenos Aires tastes, using meat that is ground, rather than chunked, before it is mixed with tomatoes, onions, sweet pepper, and paprika. Maybe his relatives would complain, but I thought the tasty delicacies delivered the right mix of beef and seasoning. The four-inch flaky-crusted purse makes for a good light lunch.

Different fillings are wrapped in differently shaped pastry packaging, but it's the insides that provide the main interest. Last week, there was Swiss cheese and onion; also corn, cheese, and hot pepper; white corn and tomato; and spinach with béchamel. A nutty, slithery combination of eggplant and sesame seeds was given the original seal of approval by Destuet's cocker spaniel, Dalton, who consumed six of them in Buenos Aires's famed Confiteria Danubio before his befuddled owner got a bite. Still, Destuet takes pride in the story, pointing out that Dalton's grandmother, Shirley ("Just like Shirley Bassey," Destuet says, beaming), was the champion cocker spaniel of all Argentina. If her offspring's tastes are any indication, I expect she was a canine of great culinary refinement.

Patagonia Cafe is open Monday through Friday from 8 to 8, Saturday from 10 to 7; cash only; it delivers. ▬



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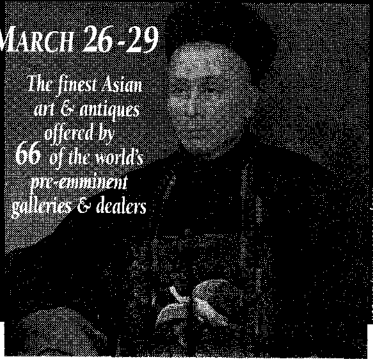

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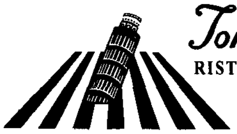

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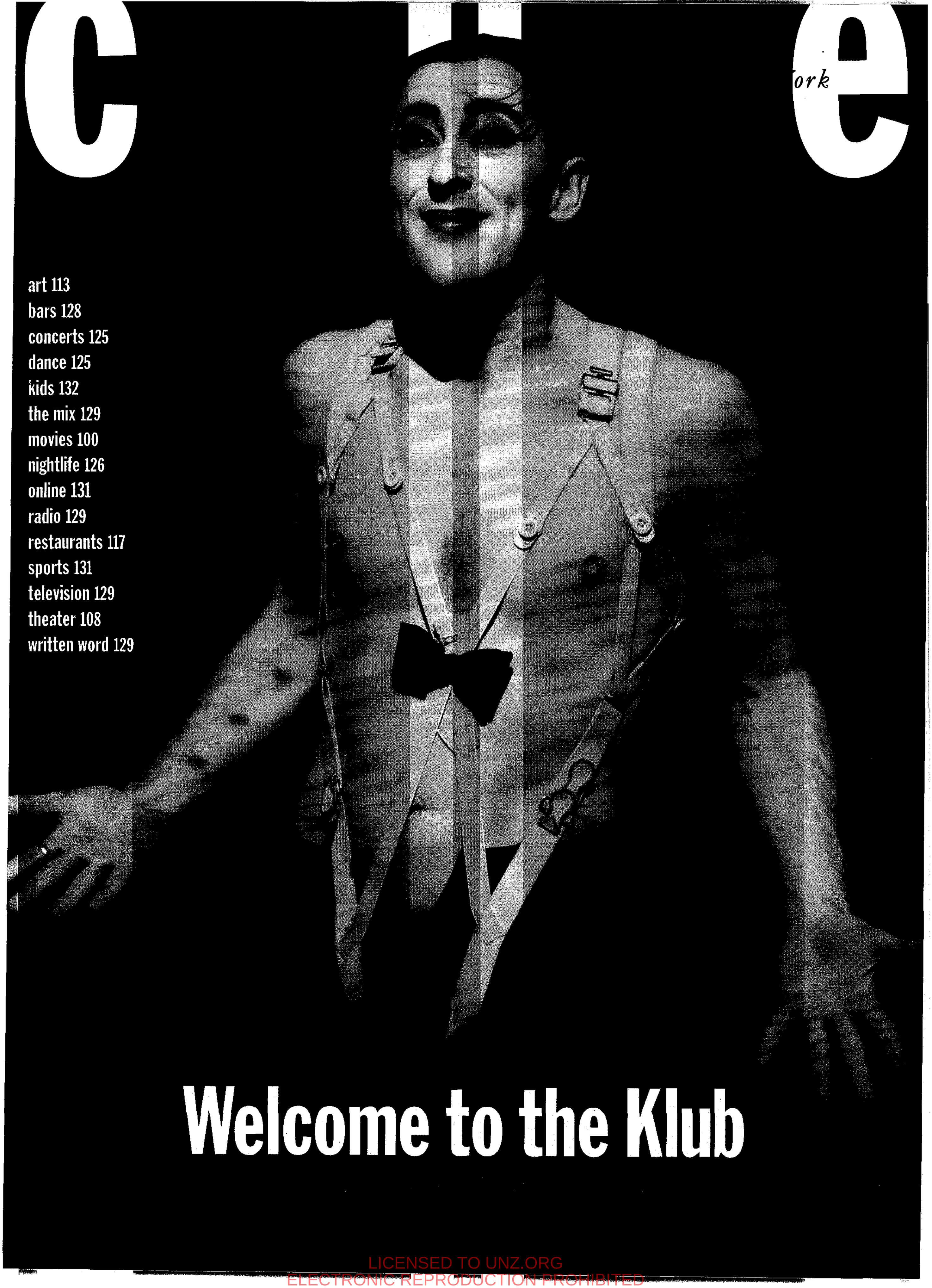

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movies

Mendel . . . Kiarostami . . . Valley of the Dolls

New Films

Afterglow—Two marriages hit the skids, and, seeking comfort, the unhappy spouses unknowingly swap partners. With Nick Nolte, Julie Christie, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Jonny Lee Miller. (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Regency.*

★**Amistad**—Steven Spielberg has made a stiff but powerful film about an actual revolt aboard a slave ship in 1839 and the constitutional struggle that followed in its wake. On trial for murder and piracy, the Africans are defended by abolitionists who hire a real-estate lawyer, Roger Baldwin (Matthew McConaughey), to try the case. Cinque (Djimon Hounsou) speaks (through a translator) and recounts the entire tale: The Africans, mostly from the Mende tribe, were kidnapped by rival tribesmen, kept in a slave fortress off the coast of Sierra Leone, and then taken across the ocean in an illegal Portuguese slaver. As Cinque speaks, we see it at last—the voyage, the excruciating transit in the cargo hold known in accounts of the slave trade as "the middle passage." Spielberg stages these scenes with a power that perhaps he alone in film history is capable of. There are, I suppose, less sensational ways of doing this material, but Spielberg's way is astonishing, and the shock for us lies both in the images themselves and in the realization that we have never really seen this primal American story. By contrast, the comparable passages in *Roots* are no more than genteel. (Denby; 12/15/97) (2 hrs. 30 mins.; R) *The Movies at Bayside.*

★**The Apostle**—This is the best movie ever made about a man of God—which is to say, the most honest and morally the most ambiguous. Robert Duvall plays Sonny, a Texas Pentecostal preacher, and he's completely on top of what he's doing. One night Sonny has a vision: His wife (Farrah Fawcett) is sleeping with a handsome young minister. He returns home in a drunken rage, and with half the town watching, takes a baseball bat to the minister's head. Sonny has to disappear fast, so he hits the road and emerges as a newborn itinerant man of God. He settles into a bedraggled but pleasant Louisiana town, where, identifying himself as "E.F., The Apostle," he joins forces with a retired black minister and builds a congregation from the ground up. *The Apostle* gets at something authentic and challenging—the insistent goodness of a man never free of dishonesty or sin. Sonny is too much a sinner simply to possess God. He remains an eternal suppliant, a candidate for blessedness, and therefore, despite everything, a hero. (Denby; 1/12/98) (About 1 hr. 50 mins.; NR) *Waverly; Chelsea; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**As Good As It Gets**—Helen Hunt plays Carol, a straight-talking single mother obsessed with the care of her severely asthmatic young son. Carol has neglected herself, and she falls into the one thing in the world that she needs least—a relationship with a matchlessly rude writer, Melvin (Jack Nicholson), who suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder. Melvin torments his Manhattan neighbor—a gay artist (Greg Kinnear). But the movie, as we can tell early on, is a Scrooge story. The question is not when Melvin will melt but how. A superbly written and acted tearjerker. (Denby; 12/22/97–12/29/97) (2 hrs. 13 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; The Movies at Bayside.*

Ayn Rand: A Sense of Life—A documentary of the life and times of the best-selling author and objectivist philosopher. Written and directed by Michael Paxton; narrated by Sharon Gless. (2 hrs. 21 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

The Big Lebowski—Jeff Lebowski, known as the Dude (Jeff Bridges), shuffles through life in a pothead haze. He gets involved in a bizarre intrigue involving another man named Lebowski, a millionaire with a promiscuous young wife who may or may not have been kidnapped. Hired to deliver the ransom money, the Dude suffers a series of disasters, the result of his own ineptitude and the interventions of his bowling buddy Walter (John Goodman), a Jewish paranoid who misinterprets everything he sees. It's only amusing the first time the Dude gets lost in his own story—a story so incoherent that he can't explain it to anyone. (The funniest thing is a cameo appearance by John Turturro as a gay Latino bowler.) Jeff Bridges has so much dedication as an actor that he sacrifices himself to the Coen brothers' self-defeating conception. Even Bridges can't open up a character who remains unconscious. (Denby; 3/16/98) (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea West; Beekman; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside.*

Opening
Clueless

In 'Wild Things,' a high-school guidance counselor (Matt Dillon, below, with Denise Richards) is drawn into a maze of deceit when the local rich girl seduces him—then cries rape. The thriller from director John McNaughton ('Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer') opens Friday, March 20.

Photograph by Jon Farmer/Mandalay Entertainment.

The Borrowers—John Goodman stars in the film version of the famous series of books about a miniature family. (1 hr. 30 mins.; G) *84th Street; New Coliseum; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; The Movies at Bayside.*

Caught Up—A convicted felon who's basically a good guy falls in with the criminal element. Starring Bokeem Woodbine, L. L. Cool J, Snoop Doggy Dogg, and Cynda Williams. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Criterion Center.*

Dangerous Beauty—Catherine McCormack is a sixteenth-century Venetian courtesan who uses her brain to trade beauty for power. Also starring Rufus Sewell and Fred Ward. Directed by *thirtysomething*'s Marshall Herskovitz. (2 hrs.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Gemini; Lincoln Square.*

Dark City—A man discovers his memories aren't his own and fights to discover reality. With Kiefer Sutherland, Rufus Sewell, Jennifer Connelly, and William Hurt. Directed by Alex Proyas. (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; 59th Street East; Criterion Center; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Plaza .*

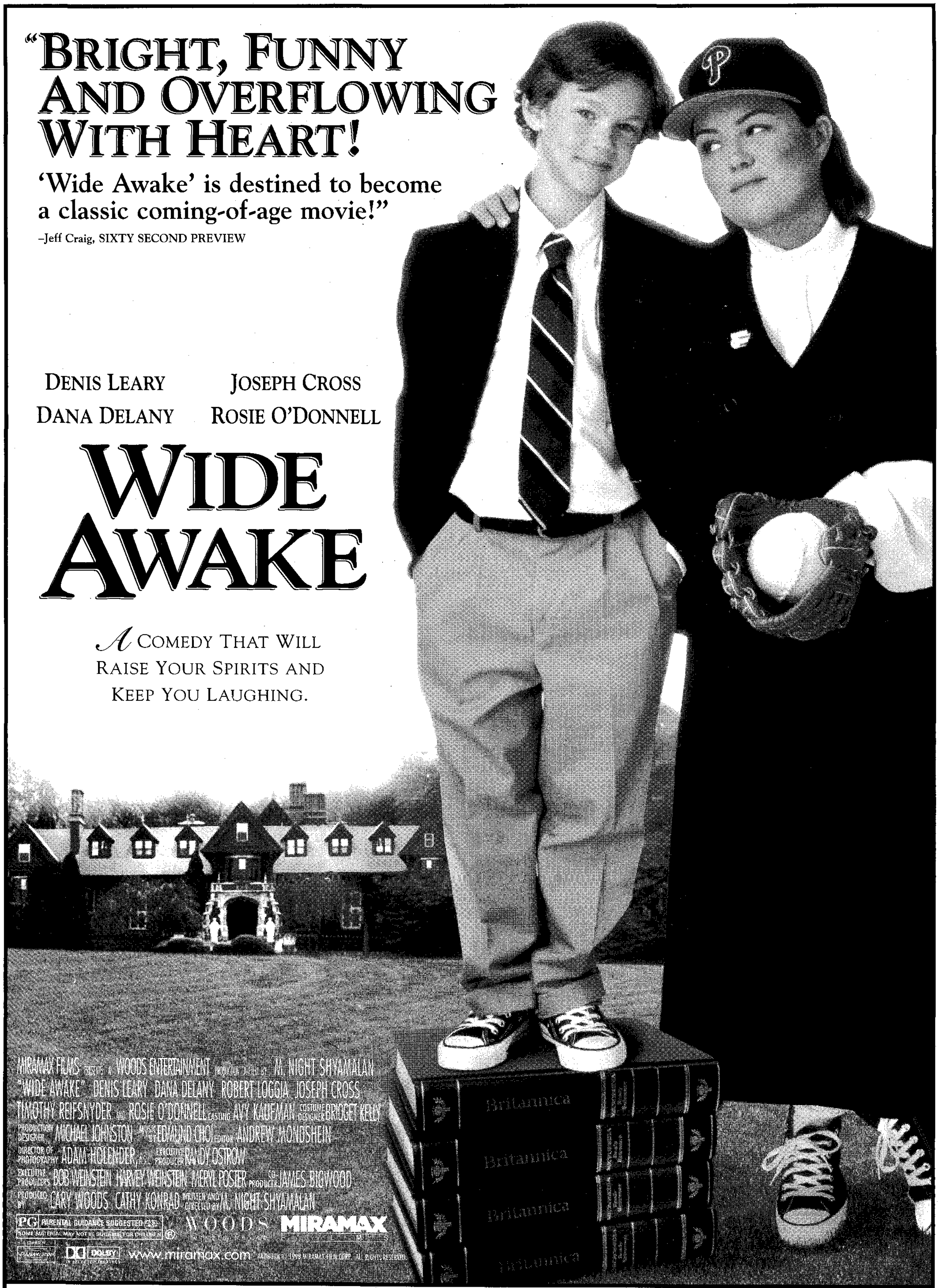
Deconstructing Harry—There are some excruciatingly funny moments in Woody Allen's new movie, but scandalously entertaining as parts of it are, the picture still left me in the foulest of foul moods. Ostensibly, it's about a selfish writer, Harry Block (Woody Allen), who travels to his alma mater in order to accept an honorary degree. Harry is at an impasse in both his creative and his personal life, and as he tries to get someone to accompany him on his trip, various women show up and tear into him—he has cheated on them, he has used their experiences with him in his novels and stories, he's a shit, a twerp, a betrayer, and so on. I have nothing against egocentricity, but Allen doesn't seem to realize that he's left the impression that women are drawn to Harry only because his creator is a famous movie director. (Denby; 12/29/97) (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

Everest: The Movie—The first-ever IMAX footage from Everest documents the 1996 summit climb of an international expedition. Directed by David Breashears and Ed Viesturs (45 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Square.*

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing.

'Cue' cover photograph by Joan Marcus.



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Fireworks (Hana-Bi)—Ultra-talented Tarantino hero Takeshi Kitano is a good cop trying to right the injustices around him with a heavy, violent hand. Written and directed by Kitano. (1 hr. 43 mins.; NR) *Opens Friday at Film Forum.*

Frozen—A young performance artist in Beijing makes his own suicide his last work of art. Based on a true story, the unauthorized Chinese production was written and directed by Wu Ming (which means 'No Name'). (About 1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Opens Friday at Cinema Village.*

The Full Monty—Robert Carlyle stars as Gaz, an out-of-work steelworker in Sheffield, England, who rounds up his unemployed friends and persuades them to put together a male strip troupe. Directed by Peter Cattaneo. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Sutton; Metro Cinema.*

Funny Games—An Austrian thriller about a family whose vacation becomes a nightmare when a pair of clean-cut young men take them hostage. Written and directed by Michael Haneke. (1 hr. 43 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

★**Good Will Hunting**—Mopping up at M.I.T., Will Hunting (Matt Damon) casually solves problems left on the blackboards, problems intended to stump the best mathematical minds in America. The formidable Professor Lambeau (Stellan Skarsgård), recognizing Will's uncanny talent, takes the boy under his wing, keeping him out of jail by agreeing to get him into therapy. Will lands in the office of Lambeau's old friend and rival Sean McGuire (Robin Williams), a bit of a screw-up himself but perhaps the one shrink in Boston who can understand Will. This movie has wit and temperament to burn—there isn't a dead scene in it. In the end, however, the script takes a disastrous turn toward conventionality. What I will always remember is an edge of temper. The film persuades us that genius is of incalculable worth but utter hell to live with. (Denby; 12/8/97) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea West; Murray Hill Cinemas; New York Twin; Lincoln Square; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre.*

Great Expectations—A modern-day twist on the Dickens tale, with Ethan Hawke as a poor artist and fisherman whose mysterious benefactor sets him up as SoHo's newest hot talent. Gwyneth Paltrow is the pretty girl he's known and loved forever—though, given her pervasive unpleasantness, it's not clear why. Directed by Alfonso Cuaron. (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Ziegfeld.*

Hush—Gwyneth Paltrow goes to live with her new mother-in-law (Jessica Lange) and discovers she chose the wrong family to marry into. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Movieworld.*

Jackie Brown—Samuel L. Jackson plays Ordell Robbie, an egotistical L.A. gun seller. Ordell keeps a number of people in his employ, including a libidinous white surfer girl (Bridget Fonda); a mangy ex-con (Robert De Niro); and a stewardess, Jackie Brown (Pam Grier), who carries cash for Ordell back and forth between Los Angeles and Mexico. The movie is about Jackie's attempt to break free of Ordell and fleece him of his money. It's actually an elongated and ambitious B movie—a dogged homage to the kind of atmospheric minor crime picture that Tarantino, having grown up in a video store, enjoys more than he does prestige movies. After the formal bravura of *Pulp Fiction*, it's as if he were saying, "Look, no tricks; everything is exactly as it seems." So it may turn out that Quentin Tarantino is not, after all, the American Godard, not a mall-rat pop genius eager to transform pulp into formally demanding art. He really likes pulp for its stiff, repetitive, bullheaded qualities. He likes it so much, he's made his own sober version of it. (Denby; 1/5/98) (2 hrs. 34 mins.; R) *Embassy 2–3.*

Kissing a Fool—David Schwimmer has doubts about his fiancée's commitment so he asks his best friend to test her. With Bonnie Hunt, Jason Lee, and Mili Avital. Directed by Doug Ellin. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; Main Street Cinemas.*

Krippendorf's Tribe—Dr. James Krippendorf (Richard Dreyfuss) is an anthropologist with three kids who don't respect him and a research grant that has long run out. And he has to deliver a report to his university. Where's his proof? That is, where's the documentary evidence of the previously undiscovered New Guinea tribe that he claims to have stumbled across some years ago? The tribe, of course, doesn't exist. Krippendorf manufactures, in his suburban backyard, a film illustrating the curious habits of these people, and the academic audience is fooled. His nemesis—Dr. Allen (Lily Tomlin)—doesn't believe him; Jenna Elfman (playing a sycophantic anthropologist) comes on so hard that we have trouble accepting her as a love interest for Dreyfuss—she seems like a creep. Thrown together without grace or beauty, the film falls below the level of satire—it's burlesque, really. (Denby; 3/9/98) (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Crossbay II; Atrium.*

Kundun—Unlike the fatuous, conventional *Seven Years in Tibet*, this movie has been made with love. It has an assured beauty and an exquisite formality that honor the subject. And yet, lovely as it is, *Kundun* is of very little dramatic interest—it's an extremely beautiful, boring movie. Approaching an alien tradition, Scorsese is entirely respectful, and the respectfulness dulls out the movie. I can't escape the feeling that Buddhism is an impossible subject for the movies. After all, great movie characters are men of overbearing will—Charles Foster Kane, or Vito and Michael Corleone, or Scorsese's Jake La Motta—not characters who renounce will. (Denby; 1/5/98) (1 hr. 53 mins.; PG) *Village East; Guild 50th Street.*

★**L.A. Confidential**—The best American movie of 1997. Based on James Ellroy's 1990 novel about corruption and honor in the L.A.P.D., it's set in 1953 after the local Mafia boss has gone to prison. A crumb-bum named Sid Hudgens (Danny DeVito) is the publisher of a tabloid scandal sheet; he alerts the police to trivial forms of vice and then photographs for his magazine a celebrity cop, Jack Vincennes (Kevin Spacey), making the bust. Bud White (Russell Crowe) is a bullheaded cop and a tool of the seemingly benevolent but actually vicious chief of detectives, Dudley Smith (James Cromwell). Ed Exley, played by Guy Pearce, is a straight-arrow cop, all ambition and calculation. Kim Basinger, soft and saddened, is very touching as a guilty hooker, a good-bad girl worthy of the high forties. The movie is filled with wonderful actors—David Strathairn, in a pencil-line mustache; Simon Baker Denny as an eager-to-please young actor-stud. This violent story truly earns its quiet, ambiguous final note of exhausted calm. (Denby; 9/29/97) (2 hrs. 17 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; 19th St. East; 34th St. Showplace; Chelsea West; New York Twin; 84th Street; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Fortway; Kings Plaza; Marboro; Bay Terrace; Main Street Cinemas; Atrium.*

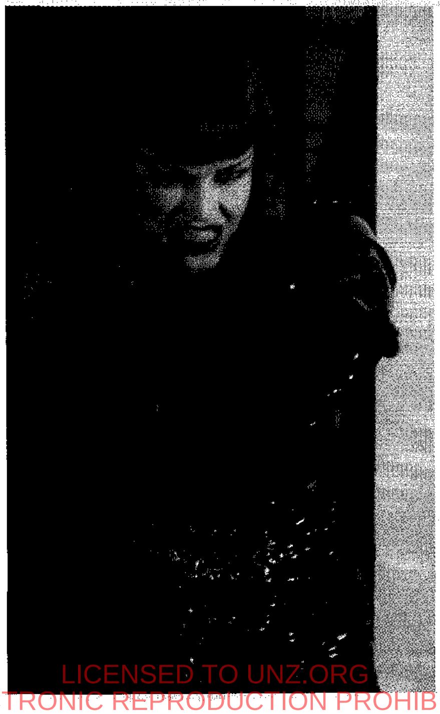
Leather Jacket Love Story—An erotic gay comedy about a love affair between a valley boy and a biker. Starring Sean Tataryn and Christopher Bradley. (1 hr. 40 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

★**Live Flesh**—Eager to become the world's greatest lover, our hero Victor (Liberto Rabal) sleeps with the wives of the two Madrid policemen who once put him in jail—first Clara (the great Angela Molina, of the tragic mask); then Elena (Francesca Neri), the woman who lured him into trouble some years earlier. The adulterous joining of Victor and Elena is charged with the many varieties of desire, guilt, and ambivalence. It's a scene worth waiting for—certainly the most sensual of Almodóvar's heterosexual love scenes. For Almodóvar, sexual passion is part of the cruel joke of Spanish guilt and fatalism. Sex is a matter of life and death that drives people into absurd situations; Almodóvar's most tragic scenes slide into farce (and vice versa). Despite his erotic fixations, Pedro Almodóvar is the cinema's last true innocent. (Denby; 1/26/98) (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; 62nd and Broadway.*

Festival

The Next Picture Show

Back for its fifth year, the New York Underground Film Festival rounds up the kind of off-center movies you don't see coming out of "Indie-wood." The 100-plus-picture lineup features grumpy Vincent Gallo (playing a street preacher in *Hollywood Salome*), a retarded man who likes to watch porn and grope women (in the documentary *Jefftowne*), and amazons from outer space (terrorizing Memphis in *The Sore Losers*, below). The festival—which will also honor Doris Wishman, history's only female "sexploitation" director—runs at Anthology Film Archives, March 18 though 22. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.)



Photograph courtesy of the New York Underground Film Festival.

★**Love and Death on Long Island**—A crusty English writer, Giles De'Ath (John Hurt), falls in love with an image—the face of an American actor, a teen idol named Ronnie Bostock (Jason Priestley). De'Ath is a London widower, a creature of routine who regards the world outside with hauteur and fear. One day he wanders into the wrong auditorium at the multiplex—the one playing "Hotpants College 2"—and is about to leave when Ronnie Bostock appears. De'Ath's astonished face, caught in the reflected light of the screen, suggests a man ravished from soul to bowels by an emotion he has never experienced before. The joke, of course, is that Jason Priestley—sideburns, full wavy hair, rotten-angel smile—looks like a second-rate teen fave from about 1954. But De'Ath becomes obsessed, rushing to eastern Long Island, where Ronnie lives with his girlfriend (Fiona Leowi), and turns himself into a seducer of considerable guile. Writer-director Richard Kwietniowski's debut effort is a triumph, a buoyant and elegant achievement—romantic and ruminative yet always precise, a comedy of longing propelled by a strong current of satirical observation. (Denby; 3/16/98) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Love Walked In—Denis Leary is a lounge pianist who uses his own pretty wife (Aitana Sanchez Gijon) to set up a wealthy patron as an adulterer. With Terence Stamp. Directed by Juan J. Campanella. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

Ma Vie en Rose—The incredibly appealing story of a little boy who thinks he's a little girl and the emotional upheavals this stubborn belief creates among his family and neighbors. Winner of a 1996 César award. (1 hr. 28 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Mean Streets—Scorsese's 1973 breakout film about low-level New York mafiosos, starring up-and-comers Harvey Keitel and Robert De Niro. (1 hr.

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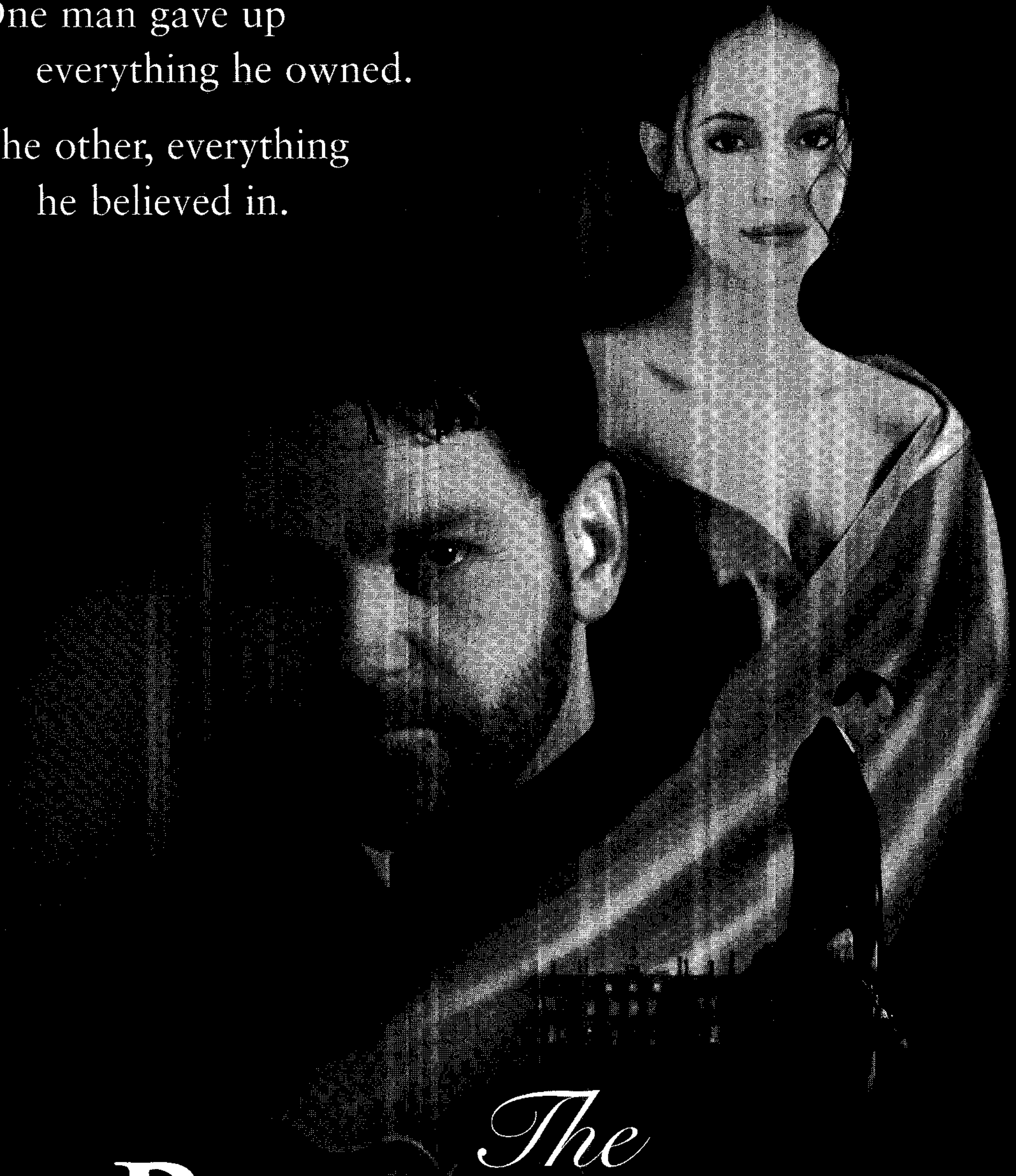

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EIL PATRICK HARRIS ROBERT LOGGIA AND BLYTHE DANNER MUSIC BY STEPHEN ENDELMAN COSTUME DESIGNER ANNA SHEPPARD EDITOR JACQUELINE CAMBAS PRODUCTION DESIGNER DAVID BRISBIN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY PETER SOVA CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ALESSANDRO F. UZIELLI
INTERSCOPE R RESTRICTED EXECUTIVE PRODUCER LATA RYAN WRITTEN BY RICK RAMAGE PRODUCED BY TED FIELD DIANE NABATOFF AND SCOTT KROOPF DIRECTED BY LESLI LINKA GLATTER DOLBY POLYGRAM FILMS
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OPENS IN NEW YORK ON MARCH 27TH!

50 mins.; R) *Film Forum.*

Men With Guns—On the eve of his retirement, a Latin American doctor sets off to visit the students he trained for village medicine and discovers the political persecution that lies beyond the city. Starring Federico Luppi, Mandy Patinkin, and Kathryn Grody. Directed by John Sayles. (2 hrs. 8 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Moon Over Broadway—A documentary of the making of Carol Burnett's Broadway comedy *Moon Over Buffalo*. Created by D. A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus. (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

★**Mrs. Dalloway**—In this accomplished but slightly tedious adaptation of Virginia Woolf's great novel, Vanessa Redgrave is Clarissa Dalloway, a prosperous woman—married to a member of parliament—who is preparing for her annual party. In the hours before the party, Mrs. Dalloway reviews her life, casting back 30 years to easy summer days at her family's country estate, where, as a young woman, she rejected a demanding, puppyish suitor, Peter Walsh, in favor of the more stable and successful Richard Dalloway. Did she marry the right man? *Mrs. Dalloway* is at its most inventive, and most Woolfian, when Redgrave is front and center, behaving with elaborate social grace and thinking very different things to herself. Just hearing Redgrave pronounce the word "dis-ahs-ter" (her appraisal of her own party) is reason enough to see the movie. In any case, I can't imagine any other actress large enough (in every sense) to hold together this plotless story. Redgrave makes the heroine all of a piece—timid, conventional, but alive to every breeze of consciousness. (Denby; 2/23/98) (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG-13) *Angelika Film Center; Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Niagara Niagara—A woman with Tourette's syndrome takes a handsome loner with her on a harrowing, comical road trip to find a rare doll. Starring Robin Tunney and Henry Thomas. Directed by Bob Gosse. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

A Personal Journey With Martin Scorsese Through American Movies—A weeklong sneak preview of Scorsese's documentary, in which he reflects on film clips from the last 100 years of American cinema and tells how movies shaped his character and his work. To be released on video in April. (3 hrs. 46 mins.; NR) *Crown Gotham.*

Post Coitum—A successful French book editor with a husband and two children falls in love with another man, and the downward spiral begins. Directed by Brigette Roüan. (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Primary Colors—See Denby, pg. 83. (About 2 hrs.; R) *Opens Friday.*

The Real Blonde—The writer-director Tom DiCillo had a great idea for a movie—a sexual roundelay set among young models and actors in New York. *The Real Blonde* undresses quite a few people, but the picture is so dully written and uncertainly directed that the audience is left wondering whether the stentorian clichés coming out of the characters' mouths are meant satirically or simply represent DiCillo's idea of how people talk. The audience can't possibly enjoy the sight of Matthew Modine floundering around as a failed actor who doesn't seem to know what he wants to do with himself. In such a case, empathy gives way to irritation. The other victims of DiCillo's miscalculations include Catherine Keener, Daryl Hannah, Maxwell Caulfield, Bridgette Wilson, and, as a hypocritical loudmouth agent, a stridently unfunny Kathleen Turner. (Denby; 3/9/98) (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Waverly; Coronet; 86th Street; Lincoln Square.*

Senseless—Marlon Wayans is a workaholic who competes with David Spade for a $60,000-a-year analyst's job. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Embassy 2–3; Nova.*

Shampoo Horns—A night in the lives of a group of club kids. Starring Michael Alig. Directed by Manuel Toledano. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Sphere—At the end of *Sphere*, the three principals—Dustin Hoffman, Samuel L. Jackson, and Sharon Stone—agree, for the good of humanity, to forget everything that has happened to them in the movie up to that point. This is a pact I can only rush to join, and with exactly the same motive. There are some things that humankind is just better off not knowing about. (Denby; 3/2/98) (About 2 hrs.; R) *New Coliseum.*

★**The Sweet Hereafter**—Atom Egoyan's film is a rarity. Adapted from Russell Banks's 1991 novel devoted to the aftermath of a devastating school-bus accident, the film appears to be a kind of detective story. A big-city lawyer, Mitchell Stephens (Ian Holm), enters a snowy, forlorn town in British Columbia after fourteen children have died and travels about interviewing the parents and survivors, desperate to enlist everyone, including the teenage survivor, Nicole (Sarah Polley), in a grievance suit. As Stephens investigates, we see what led up to the accident—the family life of the town, with its fissures and its secrets, including adultery and a suggestion of incest—and eventually we see the accident itself. The film cuts backward and forward in time, and we expect that Stephens will uncover some amazing circumstance that will explain everything. We experience the accident through the eyes of Billy (Bruce Greenwood), who is driving behind the bus and is the father of two of the children. Billy sees; he's the hero of the movie, an unillusioned man, rejecting avenging lawyers and bad-luck omens in favor of the most bitter reality. His adulterous scenes with Alberta Watson (the mother in David O. Russell's *Spanking the Monkey*) have an acrid intimacy. The actors are all excellent in a plain style that avoids irony, pose, perversity. By the end of the movie, everything comes together—the answer to the detective inquiry is all that is most difficult to face in life. If there were many movies as reality-bound as this one, I think I would go mad. That this one exists, however, is almost a blessing. (Denby; 11/24/97) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Cinema Village 12th St; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

The Man in the Iron Mask—Leonardo DiCaprio is a lusty French king who keeps his saintly twin brother locked away in the Bastille—until four Musketeers (played by Jeremy Irons, John Malkovich, Gerard Depardieu, and Gabriel Byrne) decide to switch the siblings and save the country. With Anne Parillaud, Judith Godreche, and Edward Atterton. Directed by Randall Wallace. (2 hrs. 11 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Olympia Theatre; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Movieworld; Plaza.*

★**Titanic**—Writer-director James Cameron has pulled it off. This fabulously expensive watery epic is actually a very good movie. *Titanic* begins with a treasure hunter, Brock Lovett (Bill Paxton), who is obsessed with the sunken hulk. Lovett's submersible robot enters one of the deluxe staterooms to retrieve not the famous diamond he was looking for but only a drawing of a naked young woman wearing the stone. It turns out that the woman, Rose, is still alive; she's an articulate 100-year-old beauty (Gloria Stuart) who joins Lovett at his ship and then holds him and his crew of tech-no-ruffians in thrall with her story of what happened. Back in 1912, the 17-year-old Rose DeWitt Bukater (Kate Winslet) boards the ship in utter misery. Rose is accompanied by her awful fiancé, Cal Hockley (Billy Zane), a domineering steel-baron heir from Pittsburgh, and her snobbish mother (Frances Fisher). Onboard, Rose meets her soul mate, Jack Dawson (Leonardo DiCaprio). A gambler, Jack has the wit to see that Rose's unhappiness hides a bold, deeply romantic and sexual nature. Except for the crude, good-hearted Denver millionairess Molly Brown (Kathy Bates), the wealthy are unspeakably rude or just frightened and starchy. Jack, the interloper, takes Rose down to steerage, where the real people are having themselves a fine time drinking and dancing up a storm. This sort of cheesy stuff is redeemed only by the romantic charge between Winslet and DiCaprio. The sinking is lovely—detailed, agonizingly slow at first and then rushed and panicky and grandly gruesome at the end. As Jack and Rose hang at the railing, people lose their grip and go crashing down the deck or fall from the heights into the

Talent

The Fundamentalist Things Apply

After the screening of his critically acclaimed *Taste of Cherry* at last fall's New York Film Festival, Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami stood in the Walter Reade Theater and took questions from a confused audience. The queries arose from his movie's disjunctive ending: an abrupt video of the film crew milling around the desert set. Did Kiarostami tack on this Brechtian scene to make his topic—suicide—more palatable to his fundamentalist government? Or was there a hidden meaning? "It just shows that life goes on," Kiarostami explained through a translator. "From a distance, we can understand everything better." Over tea a few days later, though, Kiarostami cheerfully admitted that even he didn't quite understand the final scene—"but," he added, "I like it because I keep thinking about it." The soft-spoken director is known for examining human quandaries with deft simplicity—his previous film, *Through the Olive Trees,* dealt with courtship in the wake of an earthquake. In *Taste of Cherry* (opening Friday), a man drives his Range Rover around Tehran, trying to find someone to assist him in his suicide. His various passengers offer compelling arguments as to why he shouldn't—or, in one instance, should—continue his mission. It's an existential question Kiarostami felt he had to explore. "To me, life without the possibility of suicide would be very tough," he said. "It's almost like when you show a movie and when it starts, you close all the doors and say, 'Nobody can exit.' If you did that to your audience, it would be very difficult for them to enjoy your film." *Taste of Cherry* won the Palme d'Or at Cannes last summer (Iranian censors allowed him to enter the competition at the final hour), but the award ceremony caused a scandal at home. In the heat of the moment, Kiarostami disregarded a code of fundamentalist Islamic behavior—he kissed presenter Catherine Deneuve on the cheek.

PATRICIA FALVO

Photograph by Robin Holland.

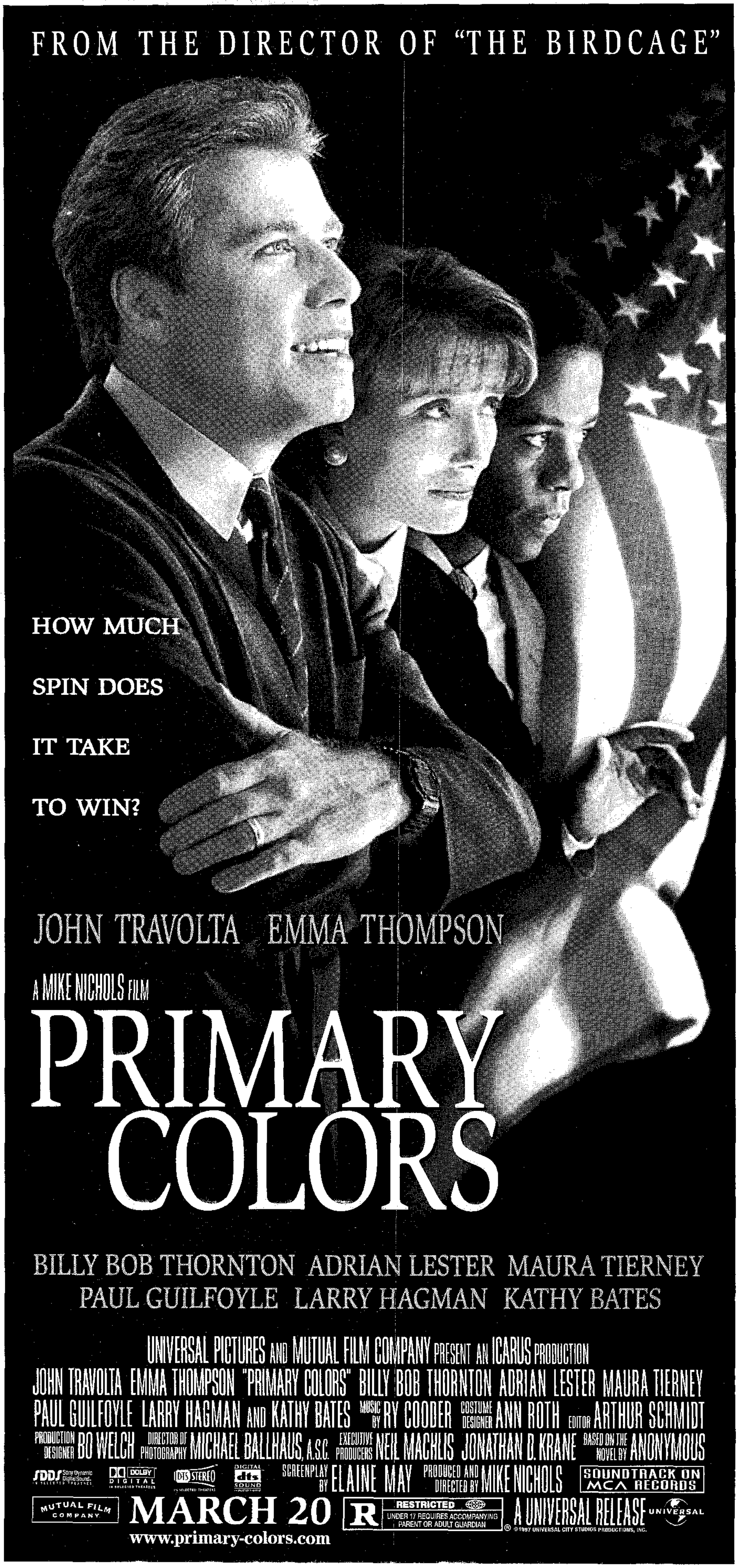
water. After the ship goes under, Cameron has his finest, cruelest moment—the survivors left in the vast expanse of freezing water wailing in confusion. As for Rose, she is delivered into an active and brilliant life. The ship may be ponderous, but Cameron's conception stays light in the water. (Denby; 12/29/97) (3 hrs. 17 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Astor Plaza; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Nova; Olympia Theatre; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; Plaza; The Movies at Bayside.*

Twilight—Paul Newman is an aging private investigator who does a favor for an old friend (Gene Hackman) and gets caught up in a murder mystery. With Susan Sarandon and Stockard Channing. Directed by Robert Benton. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; 72nd St. East; UA East; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; Kingsway; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas; Movieworld; The Movies at Bayside.*

U.S. Marshals—Tommy Lee Jones plays his tenacious character from *The Fugitive,* but this time he's chasing Wesley Snipes. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Coronet; Criterion Center; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Movieworld.*

★**Wag the Dog**—Barry Levinson's political and media satire goes as fast as the wind, and that's a relief because the idea behind the movie is thin. Very thin—and at times offensively glib. So if Levinson had directed with a heavy hand, or paused for more than an instant's reflection, he would have killed the nasty fun. It's less than two weeks before an election, and the president, seeking another term, is accused of molesting a teenage girl just outside the Oval Office. That the allegation may be false is not the point; the Washington *Post* is about to run the story. What to do? The president's operative Winifred Ames (Anne Heche) calls in a Dick Morris–like Mr. Fixit, Conrad Brean (Robert De Niro), and Brean, together with a big-deal Hollywood producer, Stanley Motss (Dustin Hoffman), distracts the press and the public. They whip up a nonexistent war with mighty Albania, complete with sinister Albanian terrorists crossing the Canadian border carrying a nuke in a suitcase. Now, satire doesn't have to be responsible, but it does have to be internally coherent, and this idea, however funny, is so extremely opportunistic—and at times so crassly conceived—that it falls into a variety of contradictions of its own making. (The script was written by David Mamet, who claims never to have read the novel—*American Hero,* by Larry Beinhart—that an earlier version of the screenplay was based on.) I have to say that *Wag the Dog* is accomplished and at times viciously funny. Levinson, shooting very fast and cheaply, creates a likable, low-key world of rogues and scoundrels working together to gull the public; we enjoy their company, we enjoy the pretense that political and media life is like this—fast, wisecracking, devastatingly effective. The picture conveys an irresistible pleasure in fakery for its own sake, and that's its charm. (Denby; 1/19/98) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Village East; Sutton; Lincoln Square.*

★**The Wedding Singer**—In Sandler's new comedy (set in 1985), he's a suburban New Jersey entertainer at weddings and "functions," a charmer with long hair who makes eyes at aunts and uncles as he sings. On the side, he gives voice lessons to an old lady (Ellen Dow)—basically, he's a mild fellow who wants to get along and make his way in the world. He spends most of the film making eyes at Drew Barrymore, who plays a plump angelic blonde. It's a very pleasant movie but soft as a down quilt. Sandler's not only the life of the party; he's a part-time shrink, a peacemaker who brings people together. Of course, no one takes him very seriously. Why would anyone wed a man who sings at weddings? Will this schlumpy guy defeat an overconfident Wall Street type and win Drew Barrymore? Sandler is a gifted young man, but if he's going to become a big comedy star in the movies, he's got to either blow the place sky-high or find a more challenging turf. He makes comedy about the underside of bland-


FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE BIRDCAGE"

HOW MUCH SPIN DOES IT TAKE TO WIN?

JOHN TRAVOLTA EMMA THOMPSON

A MIKE NICHOLS FILM

PRIMARY COLORS

BILLY BOB THORNTON ADRIAN LESTER MAURA TIERNEY
PAUL GUILFOYLE LARRY HAGMAN KATHY BATES

UNIVERSAL PICTURES AND MUTUAL FILM COMPANY PRESENT AN ICARUS PRODUCTION
JOHN TRAVOLTA EMMA THOMPSON "PRIMARY COLORS" BILLY BOB THORNTON ADRIAN LESTER MAURA TIERNEY PAUL GUILFOYLE LARRY HAGMAN AND KATHY BATES MUSIC BY RY COODER COSTUME DESIGNER ANN ROTH EDITOR ARTHUR SCHMIDT PRODUCTION DESIGNER BO WELCH DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL BALLHAUS, A.S.C. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS NEIL MACHLIS JONATHAN D. KRANE BASED ON THE NOVEL BY ANONYMOUS
SDDS Sony Dynamic Digital Sound. IN SELECTED THEATRES DOLBY DIGITAL IN SELECTED THEATRES DTS STEREO IN SELECTED THEATERS DIGITAL dts SOUND SCREENPLAY BY ELAINE MAY PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY MIKE NICHOLS SOUNDTRACK ON MCA RECORDS

MUTUAL FILM COMPANY MARCH 20 R RESTRICTED UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN A UNIVERSAL RELEASE UNIVERSAL
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ness. In *The Wedding Singer,* the blandness threatens to take over. With Christine Taylor and Alexis Arquette. (Denby; 3/2/98) (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; 19th Street East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Criterion Center; 86th Street; Lincoln Square; Movieworld.*

Wide Awake—A little boy—grappling with the fate of his recently deceased grandfather—goes in search of the meaning of life and death. Starring Denis Leary, Dana Delaney, Rosie O'Donnell and Joseph Cross. Directed by M. Night Shyamalan. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG) *Opens Friday.*

Wild Things—The local rich girl seduces her guidance counselor and claims he raped her. Then everyone piles on, including the high-school outsider (played by Neve Campbell). With Matt Dillon, Denise Richards, Theresa Russell, Bill Murray, and Kevin Bacon. Directed by John McNaughton. (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

★**The Wings of the Dove**—The movie differs from Henry James's novel in a hundred particulars, but the great point is that it works on its own terms, which is all one can ask. At the center, there are two young people who love each other but need money. Kate Croy (Helena Bonham Carter), clever, beautiful, and distinguished, lives in London with her wealthy aunt (Charlotte Rampling), who does what she can to break up Kate's relationship with the charming but penurious young journalist Merton Densher (Linus Roache). By degrees, and without his quite understanding it, Densher gets pulled into a conspiracy that Kate engineers. For there is another young person in their social circle, the fabulously wealthy American heiress Millie Theale (Alison Elliott), who is sweet, generous, and wasting away from some nameless disease. Millie needs a lover; she needs to live. Kate, who genuinely likes her, wants Millie to be happy and to know love—with Densher, who would then inherit the money, after Millie's death, that would allow Kate to marry him. The complicating factor—Henry James always has a complicating factor—is that Densher falls for Millie; or rather, he falls for her desire to experience everything she can before dying. The filmmakers have aggressively bumped the period ahead from 1902 to 1910; the characters take the subway, smoke cigarettes furiously, and attend a gallery exhibit of Klimt's decadent nudes. We get the point: Kate Croy and Merton Densher are modern personalities, rebels against the constrictions of their time. Rebellion is certainly not something that Henry James had in mind, but it's a minor vulgarization. (Denby; 11/10/97) (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema; 84th Street; Movieworld.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Dangerous Beauty; Good Will Hunting; Gummo; Live Flesh; Love and Death on Long Island; Men With Guns; Mrs. Dalloway.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *L. A. Confidential; The Full Monty.*

Cinema Village 12th St—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *The Sweet Hereafter.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Fireworks (Hana-Bi); Funny Games; Mean Streets; Moon Over Broadway.*

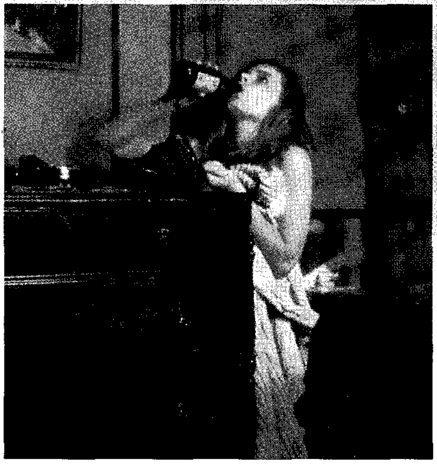
Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *Ayn Rand: A Sense of Life; Leather Jacket Love Story; Ma Vie en Rose; Shampoo Horns.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *Deconstructing Harry; The City of Lost Children.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *As Good As It Gets; Chairman of the Board; Four Days in September; Hush; Kundun; Mrs. Brown; Wag the Dog; The Wedding Singer; The Wings of the Dove.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *The Big Lebowski; Dark City; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *The Apostle; The Real Blonde.*



Happening
The Daze of Wine and Roses

Follow the girls from *Valley of the Dolls* as they speed down the road to ruin (Patty Duke, left, enjoys a pick-me-up). Then revive with a drink at the Screening Room's bar. Midnight and Sunday-brunch shows begin Friday, March 20. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.," for more info.)

14th–41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *L. A. Confidential; As Good As It Gets; Dark City; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer; The Wings of the Dove.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *L. A. Confidential; Titanic; Twilight.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *The Apostle; Hush; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *L. A. Confidential; The Big Lebowski; Good Will Hunting.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Good Will Hunting; Hush; The Man in the Iron Mask; U.S. Marshals.*

42nd–60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Dark City.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Titanic.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Love and Death on Long Island; The Sweet Hereafter; The Wedding Singer.*

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *The Real Blonde; U.S. Marshals.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *As Good As It Gets; Caught Up; Dark City; Hush; Kissing a Fool; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Mrs. Dalloway.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *Chairman of the Board.*

Embassy 2–3—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *Jackie Brown; Scream 2; Senseless.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Kundun.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) Call for information.

State—1540 Broadway (391-2900) *The Big Lebowski; Good Will Hunting; The Man in the Iron Mask; Twilight.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *The Full Monty; Wag the Dog.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Anastasia; Boogie Nights; Fallen; For Richer or Poorer; The Ice Storm; The Rainmaker; Tomorrow Never Dies.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Great Expectations.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Twilight.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *The Real Blonde; The Wedding Singer.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Closed for Renovations.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *The Big Lebowski.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *The Apostle; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; The Wings of the Dove.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *As Good As It Gets; Dangerous Beauty; Hush.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *L. A. Confidential; Good Will Hunting.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (828-9738) *As Good As It Gets; The Big Lebowski; Dark City; Hush; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; U.S. Marshals.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *Twilight.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *Live Flesh.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *L. A. Confidential; The Big Lebowski; The Borrowers; Dark City; U.S. Marshals; The Wings of the Dove.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *The Apostle; Love and Death on Long Island; Men With Guns; Mrs. Dalloway; Post Coitum; The Sweet Hereafter.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *As Good As It Gets; Dangerous Beauty; Good Will Hunting; Hush; The Real Blonde; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; Wag the Dog; The Wedding Singer.* IMAX: *Across the Sea of Time; Everest; Into the Deep; L5—The First City in Space; Four Million House Guests*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *The Full Monty; Twilight.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *The Borrowers; Dark City; Sphere; U.S. Marshals.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Senseless; Titanic; U.S. Marshals.*

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Afterglow.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *The Big Lebowski; The Borrowers; Caught Up; Dark City; Good Will Hunting; Hush; Senseless; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *L. A. Confidential; The Borrowers; Caught Up; Dark City; Hush; Senseless; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *L. A. Confidential; The Borrowers; Caught Up; Dark City; Hush; Kissing a Fool; The Replacement Killers; Senseless; Sphere; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Photograph from Everett Collection.

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *The Big Lebowski; Good Will Hunting; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; U.S. Marshals.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *The Big Lebowski; Hush; Love and Death on Long Island; Sphere; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *L. A. Confidential; Hush; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer; The Wings of the Dove.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Caught Up; Senseless; The Man in the Iron Mask; U.S. Marshals.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *Caught Up; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; U.S. Marshals.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *L.A. Confidential; The Borrowers; Caught Up; Dark City; Hush; Senseless; U.S. Marshals.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *The Big Lebowski; Good Will Hunting; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *L. A. Confidential; The Apostle; Good Will Hunting; The Man in the Iron Mask.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn (369-0838) *Anastasia; The Big Lebowski; Dark City; Good Will Hunting; Hush; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals.*

Ridgewood—55–27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *Amistad; Dark City; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *As Good As It Gets; The Big Lebowski; Hush; Kissing a Fool; Sphere; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28–60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *The Borrowers; Hush; Senseless; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Bay Terrace—211–01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *L.A. Confidential; The Big Lebowski; Good Will Hunting; The Man in the Iron Mask; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *The Big Lebowski; The Borrowers; Dark City; Hush; Titanic; U.S. Marshals.*

Cinema City—183–15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *As Good As It Gets; Hush; The Real Blonde; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

Cinemart—106–03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Dark City; Love and Death on Long Island; The Real Blonde; Titanic; Twilight; The Wedding Singer.*

Continental—70–20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *Good Will Hunting; The Man in the Iron Mask; U.S. Marshals.*

Crossbay—94–11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *Amistad; The Borrowers; Senseless; U.S. Marshals.*

Crossbay II—92–10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *The Big Lebowski; Caught Up; Dark City; Hush; Krippendorf's Tribe; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; The Wedding Singer.*

Elmwood—57–02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *The Apostle; As Good As It Gets; Titanic; The Wedding Singer.*

Forest Hills—107–16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *Dangerous Beauty; Hush.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Road, at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *The Big Lebowski; Good Will Hunting; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Dark City; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; U.S. Marshals.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) *L. A. Confidential; The Borrowers; Kissing a Fool; Titanic; Twilight.*

Midway—108–22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Closed for Renovations.*

Movieworld—242–02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Hush; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer; The Wings of the Dove.*

North Shore Towers—27–10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *The Apostle; The Sweet Hereafter.*

Plaza —103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Dark City; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic.*

The Movies at Bayside—38–39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *Amistad; As Good As It Gets; The Borrowers; Titanic; Twilight.*

Trylon—98–81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *The Big Lebowski.*

Opening

This Boy's Life

In the funny, touching 'Mendel,' a Jewish boy and his family leave post–World War II Germany for the far—and Christian—reaches of Norway. As he embraces his new culture, he begins to understand the horrors they ran away from. Opens Friday, March 20, at Quad Cinema.

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *L.A. Confidential; As Good As It Gets; The Borrowers; Good Will Hunting; Krippendorf's Tribe; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer; The Wings of the Dove.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *As Good As It Gets; The Big Lebowski; The Borrowers; Dark City; Good Will Hunting; Hush; The Man in the Iron Mask; Titanic; Twilight; U.S. Marshals; The Wedding Singer; The Wings of the Dove.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Dustin Hoffman." 3/21: *The Graduate* (1967) and *Death of a Salesman* (1985). 3/22: *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) and *Lenny* (1974). 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077); $12–$15 nonmembers; $8–$10 members; $4 ages 5–18.

Anthology Film Archives—3/18–22: "Fifth Annual New York Underground Film Festival." More than 100 cutting-edge films. Call 592-0900 for schedule information. 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110); $7.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Tribute to Charlotte Moorman." 3/21: *Topless Cellist, Charlotte Moorman* (1995) and *Charlotte Resounding* (1997). 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 230); $6; $4 for members, students, and senior citizens.

Cinema Village 12th St—"Dennis Nyback Presents." 3/23: "The Mormon Church Explains It All to You: Films From the Sixties." Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363). $8.

Different Light—3/22: *Stepping Out* (1991). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Donnell Media Center—"Meet the Makers: Marcia Rock." 3/17: *McSorley's New York* (1987) and *No Irish Need Apply* (1994). "Featuring . . . Erich von Stroheim." 3/18: *Queen Kelly* (1929). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—"Rendez-vous With French Cinema Today." 3/17: *What's So Funny About Me* (1997). 3/17–3/18: *Ma 6-T va Crack-er* (1997) and *Big Scream of Love* (1998). 3/18–3/19: *A Brother* (1997). 3/19: *Genealogies of a Crime* (1997). 3/19 and 3/22–3/23: *Bat out of Hell* (1997). 3/20–3/21: *Alors Voila* (1997) and *Dry Cleaning* (1997). 3/21–3/23: *Seventh Heaven* (1997). 3/22–3/23: *Reprisè* (1997). "New York Film Festival Encore." 3/25–3/26 and 3/28–3/29: *Public Housing* (1997). Call 875-5601 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); $8.50.

French Institute—"Cinéma & Francophonie." 3/17: *L'Oeuvre au noir* (1988) and *Joyeuz Calvaire* (1996). 3/18: *Il Était Une Fois Beyrouth* (1995) and *La Promesse* (1996). 3/24: *Salut Cousin!* (1996). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7, $10 double feature.

Japan Society—"Literature to Film." 3/17: *Wuthering Heights* (1988). 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $7.50.

Museum of Modern Art—"From the Archives: Otto Preminger." 3/19: *A Royal Scandal* (1945). 3/20 and 3/22: *Rosebud* (1975) and *Carmen Jones* (1954). 3/21: *River of No Return* (1954) and *In Harm's Way* (1964). 3/23–3/24: *The Man With the Golden Arm* (1955). 3/23: *Saint Joan* (1957). 3/24: *The Moon Is Blue* (1953). "Eisenstein." 3/17: *The General Line* (1929). "National Film Registry." 3/20: *What's Opera, Doc?* (1957) and *The Band Wagon* (1953). 3/21: *Primary* (1960) and *Dog Star Man* (1964). 3/22: *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957). "Big as Life: An American History of 8mm Films." 3/19: Various shorts. "Who the Devil Made It?" 3/20: *The Big Heat* (1953). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

New York University—3/23: *Etat de Piège ou la filière Marseillaise.* NYU Cantor Film Center; 36 E. 8th St., room 101; free.

Queens Theatre in the Park—3/20: *Citizen Kane* (1941). Flushing Meadows Corona Park, directly beyond the Queens Museum and ice-skating rink. Tickets: $4 members, $6 nonmembers. Call 718-760-0064 for more info.

Symphony Space—"The Envelope Please: 50 Years of Foreign Film and the Academy Awards." 3/17: *La Strada* (1954) and *Tristana* (1970). 3/24: *Au Revoir les Enfants* (1987) and *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1970). 2537 Broadway, at 96th St. (864-5400); $8, $5 members.

The Screening Room—Midnight show: *Valley of the Dolls* (1967). Sunday brunch: *Valley of the Dolls* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). 54 Varick St., below Canal St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for Sunday brunch patrons).

YWCA Cine-Club—"A Celebration of Japanese Cinema." 3/21–3/22: *The Ceremony* (1971). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (735-9717); $5 members, $6 nonmembers.

Photograph courtesy of First Run Features.

theater

Alan Cumming in *Cabaret*...Eugene O'Neill

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Ah, Wilderness!—Lincoln Center Theater presents Eugene O'Neill's charming—and only—comedy, which the playwright described as "a capture of a mood, an evocation [of] the spirit of a time that is dead now with all its ideals and manners and codes." Debra Monk, Craig T. Nelson, and Sam Trammell star; Daniel Sullivan directs. $45–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/18 opening. *Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

Cabaret—*Wilkommen!* Sam Mendes directs a revival of this eight-Tony-fabulous musical by Kander and Ebb. Natasha Richardson plays Sally Bowles; Alan Cumming plays the grinning emcee. Ron Rifkin and Mary Louise Wilson also star. $50–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Cabaret, bar, and banquette seating available. In previews for a 3/19 opening. *Kit Kat Klub, 124 W. 43rd St. (719-1300).*

The Deep Blue Sea—Edward Herrmann and Blythe Danner, both of whom appeared on Broadway years ago in *The Philadelphia Story*, reunite for this Terence Rattigan drama about a woman who leaves her husband for a younger, less responsible man. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 3/26 opening. *Roundabout Theatre Company Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Now Playing

Art—I sympathize with Yasmina Reza's play, which was the hit of Paris in 1995 and of London in 1996, and won awards in both cities. The plot is simple. Serge spends 200,000 francs on a five-by-four painting that is all white except for some diagonal scratches. His friend Marc considers this painting shit, and Serge's purchase of it an insult to their friendship. He tries to enlist the third of our musketeers, Yvan, to side with him. But confronted with Serge and the painting, Yvan does what he does best: He wavers. Reza's cunning dialogue has been fluently Englished by Christopher Hampton. As Marc, Alan Alda puts to insidious use his ability to pester with polish. Victor Garber's dapper Serge harbors under the façade of a convivial man-about-town a defensive arrogance expressed with mounting bile. As Yvan, Alfred Molina is pure perfection. (Simon: 3/9/98.) $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 3/1/98. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Deborah Gibson plays the girl; Chuck Wagner plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony-award-winning costumes by Ann Hould-Ward; lyrics by Tim Rice and Howard Ashman; music by Alan Menken. $22.50–$70. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100).*

Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning history of African Americans as told through tap dancing, poetry, and song. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs.*

The Capeman—Paul Simon's painstakingly crafted and vigorously ballyhooed new musical finally arrives. The score—a mix of salsa, rock, doo-wop, and gospel tunes—features more than 30 songs; the story, based on one of the most sensational double murders in New York history, follows Salvador Agron, the perp, for more than 30 years of his uncommon life, as he metamorphoses from gang tough to jailhouse poet. Book by Nobel Prize–winning poet Derek Walcott, direction and choreography by Mark Morris, and star turns by Ruben Blades and Marc Anthony. $50–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Closes 3/28. *Marquis Theater, 211 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$65. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of *Chicago* to Broadway, but since *Chicago* is about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Especially when, as here, it pays off. Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two while maintaining her come-hither brand of snootiness; minimalism prevails. If Chicago in the twenties was like this, it was more fun than Periclean Athens. Also starring Marilu Henner, Hinton Battle, and Ernie Sabella. (Simon: 12/2/96.) $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Diary of Anne Frank—Natalie Portman, the electrifying teen cutie from *Beautiful Girls*, stars in this newly adapted version of the 1955 play. Also starring Linda Lavin, Harris Yulin, George Hearn, and Austin Pendleton. $40–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 12/4/97. *Music Box Theater, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Forever Tango—Or at least for a couple of hours: This marathon of tango dancing, as interpreted by Luis Bravo, is a testament to the sultry versatility of the Argentine form. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theater, 218 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Freak—John Leguizamo has proved, in various mediums and genres, that he is versatile, witty, inventive, and charming. He writes and delivers funny dialogue within his monologues, interrupts his acting to execute nimble dance steps both elegant and satirical, and creates characters with facial expressions, vocal mannerisms, and body language that blend into a riotous lingua franca. He brings these skills to his new Broadway show, which purports to be semi-autobiographical and is surely, in Anatole France's great phrase, a story truer than truth. (Simon: 3/2/98.) $17.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, music by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

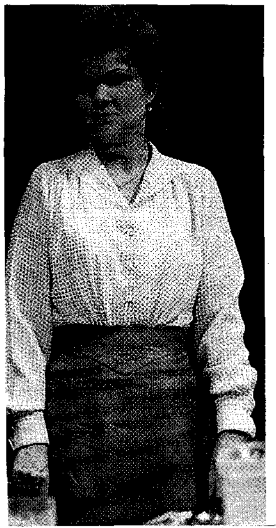
The Last Night of Ballyhoo—This romantic comedy, set in 1939 Atlanta on the eve of the premiere of *Gone With the Wind*, is Alfred Uhry's first effort since *Driving Miss Daisy*. The wait clearly paid off; he won the 1997 Tony award for Best Play. $55.

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Opening
Welded

For a study in contrasts and uncommon literary dexterity, theatergoers should treat themselves to a double bill of Eugene O'Neill classics: *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, currently at the Irish Rep., and *Ah, Wilderness!*, now at Lincoln Center. The former, as is well known, chronicles the suffering and dissolution of the Tyrone family; the latter, less famously, depicts the funnier, sunnier side of domestic life with the Millers. Each production is studded with first-rate actors (Brian Murray and Frances Sternhagen in the dysfunctional home, Craig T. Nelson and Debra Monk in the functional one), and each has been sculpted by two veteran directors (Charlotte Moore and Daniel Sullivan, respectively). Monk's transition into her new role ought to be of particular interest, because the last time she appeared on Broadway she was vamping it up in *Everybody's Girl*, an anthem to female promiscuity. "Now," she explains, "I'm everybody's mom."



Photographs: left to right, Joan Marcus; Carol Rosegg.

"A PERFECT PLAY."

- *Linda Winer, Newsday*

"VERY FUNNY."

- *Ben Brantley, The New York Times*

"YOU'LL ROAR WITH LAUGHTER."

- *Clive Barnes, New York Post*

"ART"

Alan Alda Victor Garber Alfred Molina
A new play by Yasmina Reza
Translated by Christopher Hampton Directed by Matthew Warchus

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ROYALE THEATRE 242 West 45th Street

Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/27/97. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (307-4100).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

The Life—A contemporary street opera set in eighties Times Square. Lillias White and Chuck Cooper just picked up Tony awards for their performances. Music and lyrics by Cy Coleman and Ira Gasman; book by Coleman, Gasman, and David Newman. $40–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 4/26/97. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St.(239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the actors, singers, and dancers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. And Taymor has found ways to transmute the strictly cartoonish bravura of the big-screen Lion King onto a stage so that nothing is lost in translation. (Simon: 12/1/97). $20–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly,* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, is now one of Broadway's ten longest-running musicals. Music by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200).*

The Old Neighborhood—Three interconnected one-act plays by David Mamet, starring Peter Riegert, Patti LuPone, Vincent Guastaferro, Mary McCann, and Jack Willis. Directed by Scott Zigler. $45–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 11/19/97. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Paul McKenna's Hypnotic World—Under the spell of this British hypnotist, audience members ride imaginary horses, perform rock anthems, channel Martians, and otherwise humiliate themselves. $35. Mon. at 8 and Sun. at 7. Through 3/29. *Roundabout Theatre, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (307-4100).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Nine leads, ten years, $357 million, and almost 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Ragtime—A musical based on E. L. Doctorow's historical novel, with a book by Terrence McNally and music by the composer-lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. The epic, neatly trimmed and tidied for the stage, braids the fates of three fictitious families—one black, one Jewish, one Wasp—and an assortment of historical characters. $31–$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 1/18/97. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Scarlet Pimpernel—You've seen the billboard. Now come see the show. It's got romance, suspense, swashbuckling, and a whole bunch of eighteenth-century stuff; if it succeeds, Broadway could well be on its way to becoming a French Revolution theme park. Pop composer Frank Wildhorn (*Jekyll & Hyde*) did the score. Nan Knighton adapted Baroness Orczy's novel for the stage. Christine Andreas, Terrence Mann, and Douglas Sills star. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/9/97. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4100).*

1776—The book of this 1969 musical, the gifted Peter Stone's masterpiece, is surely one of the best ever. Thrillingly incorporating the potentially divisive issue of slavery, it succeeds in keeping us, despite our knowledge of the outcome, in a state of wonderfully paradoxical suspense. Splendid as was Peter Hunt's original production, this Scott Ellis revival very nearly matches it. It will provide you not only with three hours of choice theatergoing, but also with three very rich hours of life. Music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards. (Simon: 8/25/97.) $20–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2; Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (307-4100).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the songbook Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller wrote to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

The Sound of Music—Returns to Broadway for the first time since its 1959 premiere. Hum along; bring the kids. Rebecca Luker, who played a memorable Magnolia in *Show Boat,* plays the nun turned governess, and Michael Siberry plays the widower captain. $50–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 3/12/98. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The Sunshine Boys—This Neil Simon play is a triumph of strategy. (1) It is full of one-liners: easily detachable and portable laughs. (2) The main characters, a retired vaudeville team, now hate each other, hence ever-popular insult comedy. (3) Willie Clark and Al Lewis are also Jewish, so we get audience-tickling Jewish jokes. (4) The background is show business, providing cherished showbiz humor. (5) A play about old croakers will capture Broadway's senescent regulars. (6) Big Apple–vs.–New Jersey jests draw in the trans-Hudsonians. (7) As ex-vaudevillians, Willie and Al generate nostalgia for a vanished world. Add the stage-screen-and-TV-enshrined duo of Jack Klugman (Willie) and Tony Randall (Al), and it's platinum-edged-securities time. This production at the National Actors Theatre revival is rattling good fun. (Simon: 1/5/98.) $30–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 12/8/97. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter

Talent

Welcome and *Bienvenue*

Pity the man who follows in Joel Grey's tiny but indelible footsteps. In 1966, Grey originated the Broadway role of *Cabaret's* hobgoblin emcee and won a Tony for it. Six years later, he immortalized the same part on film and won an Oscar. But Alan Cumming, a 33-year-old Scottish actor and Broadway neophyte, has swiftly unburdened himself of his predecessor's legacy. Not only does he walk in Grey's footsteps; he *swaggers* in them—for two hours each night, six nights each week, at the *Cabaret* revival now showing at the Kit Kat Klub.

Grey's master of ceremonies was menacing but precious. Nimble and slight of frame, he seemed more like an organ grinder's chimp than a whore's patron. But Cumming, taller and broader, plays the role with as much vulgarity and sensuality as his name suggests. He has red glitter sprinkled on his nipples, a tattoo stamped on his buttocks. He wears tight black pants and a pulley system to bolster his genitals. As he grins and gropes, one is certain that he alone sired Rosemary's baby—after having his way with two men and a goat. "At first it was a bit scary," admits the mild-mannered actor, whose dramatic *oeuvre* ranges from *Hamlet* to *Spice World.* "I haven't done any other show that required this kind of lewdness." He re-enacts one of the musical's naughtier dance sequences. "I'd memorize it by saying '*Fuck her!*-two-three-four / *Fuck him!*-two-three-four.' " To prepare, Cummings read Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin Stories,* on which the Kander and Ebb musical is based, plus assorted biographies of the pleasure-seeking expat. "Really, Isherwood was a posh boy with an allowance," Cumming concludes. "He went to Berlin to shag other boys." The research seems to have paid off. After each performance, fans line up to grasp his hand in fumbling congratulations—an act Cumming can mimic with lethal precision—and screen legends like Meryl Streep and Lauren Bacall stop by his dressing room to gush. Grey himself is expected to sneak into a performance sometime during the next few weeks—possibly even March 19, opening night. "Perhaps I'll have a photographer present," says Cumming. "Then we can release a photo and put an end to all these questions—'See? We're friends. Everything's fine.' "

JENNIFER SENIOR

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Anadarko—Two prisoners, their jailers, and an American Indian collide. Written by Tim Blake Nelson; directed by the Long Wharf's Doug Hughes. $15. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 7. Previews begin 3/20 for a 4/1 opening. *MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (727-7765).*

Checking Out—A ghost and a lonely Puerto Rican cross paths in the Bronx. Written by Candido Tirado. $20. English performances on Wed.–Fri. at 8; Spanish performances on Sat. at 2 and 8 and Sun. at 2 and 6:30. In previews for a 3/19 opening. *Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (354-1293).*

The Cripple of Inishmaan—An Irish orphan, Cripple Billy, dreams of landing a part in a Hollywood filmmaker's documentary in order to impress his beloved. The play is Martin McDonagh's first in his Aran Island trilogy and his second to open in New York this season. $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Previews begin 3/17 for a 4/7 opening. *The Public's Newman Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Dinah Was—A play about Dinah Washington, Queen of the Blues. Yvette Freeman (*ER*, *Working*) plays the diva—come rain or come shine; Oliver Goldstick wrote the script. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 3/24 opening. *WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. (206-0523).*

Dress to Kill—Eddie Izzard, Britain's hottest, cross-dressingest comic, offers his views on dinosaurs, the British space program, and being raised by wolves. $35–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30. In previews for a 3/26 opening. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (307-7171).*

Hot Klezmer—A brief and tuneful history of Klezmer. Presented by the American Jewish Theatre. $37.50. Schedule varies. In previews for a 3/19 opening. *Raymond J. Greenwald Theatre, 307 E. 26th St. (633-9797).*

Jails, Hospitals, & Hip-Hop—Danny Hoch, the *bandittel* from Queens, plays twelve urban misfits, then spews buckets of vitriol at Jerry Seinfeld. $10–$25. Wed. and Thurs. at 8:30, Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 11. Previews begin 3/18 for a 3/30 opening. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (477-5288).*

Long Day's Journey Into Night—This O'Neill drama opens at a perfect time, considering that its sunnier, funnier analogue, *Ah, Wilderness!*, is playing just up the street at Lincoln Center. Brian Murray and two-time Tony Award winner Fraces Sternhagen star; Charlotte Moore, as always, directs. $30–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. In previews for a 3/22 opening at 7. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Mystery of the Rose Bouquet—A psychological thriller by Manuel Puig, author of *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/19 opening. *INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Peep Show—The latest installment in the Ronnie Larsen chronicles of New York sleaze. $30–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. Previews begin 3/17 for a 3/31 opening. *Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. South, at Sheridan Sq. (239-6200).*

The Sad Dance—A musical about the trials of living with AIDS, performed by those living with HIV and the full-blown disease. Presented by the Theater Project at Housing Works. $15. Tues. and Wed. at 11 a.m., Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 3. Through 3/28. *Connelly Theater, 220 E. 4th St. (279-4200).*

St. Nicholas—Brian Cox, a happy mainstay of the British and American stage, plays a vicious Dublin theater critic who falls in love. Written and directed by Conor McPherson. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 3/17 opening. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

Tallulah's Party—Tovah Feldshuh stars in a musical about the celebrity's life—and who's more Tallulah than Tovah? Music by Arthur Siegel, lyrics by Mae Richard, book by Bob Griffiths. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 3/19 opening. *Kaufman Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Now Playing

Amazing Grace—After Timothy McVeigh's conviction, Ted Kaczynski's confession, and the Texas execution of a born-again Christian, the public may not be very eager to spend more time thinking about the death penalty. But this latest drama from Blue Light Theater Company—about a murderer awaiting her execution—could well be worth looking at, because Michael Cristofer, Pulitzer-winning author of the *The Shadow Box*, wrote the script and Marsha Mason plays the condemned. $37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (239-6200).*

As Bees in Honey Drown—Socialite Alexa Vere de Vere—one part Hepburn, two parts eyeliner, three parts luxury addict—enlists a young author to write a screenplay about her life. Written by Douglas Carter Beane; alertly directed by Mark Brokaw (*How I Learned to Drive*). Starring Bo Foxworth and J. Smith-Cameron. $47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 7/24/97. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

BAFO (Best and Final Offer)—A dark comedy about the havoc downsizing wreaks on the white male psyche. Written by Tom Strelich; directed by Robert Kalfin. $37.50 Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. Opened 3/8/98. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

The Beauty Queen of Leenane—Martin McDonagh, the Anglo-Irish playwright with the precociously long résumé, makes his American debut with this drama about an old woman's attempts to sabotage her daughter's love life. The play was one of four by McDonagh (now all of 27) to run simultaneously in London last season. $35–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Atlantic Theater Company, 336 W. 20th St. (239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

The Broadway Kids Sing Broadway—A musical revue of songs made famous by Broadway kids. Expect tunes from *Annie*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Oliver!*, and *Bye Bye Birdie*. $20. Sat. and Sun. at noon. Through 6/21. John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (354-2220)..

Eyes for Consuela—Under Terry Kinney's highly kinetic direction, this new Sam Shepard play is as adhesive as a burr, as headstrong as a burro, and as savory as a burrito. Where else would we encounter a Mexican bandit with a double family life—one on each side of the Rio Grande—who indulges in sociophilosophical dialectics with his captive gringo? As the two men made kin by marital problems, David Strathairn (Henry) is as splendid as usual, and Daniel Faraldo (Amado), new to me, a wonderful surprise. (Simon: 3/2/98.) $35. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Manhattan Theatre Club, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

A Flea in Her Ear—Bill Irwin, who proved himself a first-class interpreter of French farce in the Roundabout production of *Scapin* two years ago, now brings his directorial energies to bear on this 1907 Feydeau comedy about the misadventures of a suspicious wife. Mark Linn-Baker, last seen on his way to the forum, stars. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Roundabout's Laura Pels Theatre, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (719-1300).*

Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!—Some titles say it all, and Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way couldn't arrive in town at a more—well, let's be kind and say propitious time. $40–$45. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8:15, Sat. at 2:30 and 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30; food and drink available/optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*, written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $37.50–$57.50, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. at 2 and 7:30, Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—From letters, biographies, and court transcripts, writer-director Moisés Kaufman has put together an absorbing show about Oscar Wilde's 1895 trial for "gross indecency with male persons." $20–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 6/5/97. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (307-4100).*

Hazelwood Jr. High—A new girl arrives at her midwestern junior high, comes between two lesbian lovers, and suffers a tabloid-perfect fate. In the hands of a less capable theater company, this tale—based on actual events!—would probably be lurid and junky; in the hands of the very fine New Group (and Chloë Sevigny, an anti-ingenue if ever there was one), this site-specific production should be all that and more. $15–$30. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 8. Opened 3/5/98. *Intermediate School 70, 333 W. 17th St. (279-4200).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—John Cameron Mitchell—actor, director, and founding member of the Drama Dept.—wrote and stars in this rock concert–cum–musical, in which a German war bride finds herself in a Kansas trailer park and achieves self-actualization, not to mention tabloid fame, through songwriting. Featuring Stephen Trask and his downtown band, Cheater. $35. Mon at 8, Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. Opened 2/14/98. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (239-6200).*

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's play benefits from an original slant: child molestation as an act of consenting partners, with the child as a willing participant. Miss Vogel has written a memory play about a pedophile and his big-breasted niece by marriage, Uncle Peck and Li'l Bit, names a trifle too apt to ring true. The driving lessons Uncle Peck gives Li'l Bit over the years are a slow, careful—even caring—seduction. Mark Brokaw has directed inventively. (Simon: 3/31/97). Now starring Deirdre Lovejoy and Cotter Smith. $45–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 3/16/97. *Century Theater, 111 E. 15 St. (239-6200).*

Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly—An irrepressible, technicolor celebration of puns, fabric, and gay life. Its costumer and musical "conceiver," Howard Crabtree, died in June of 1996, just days after completing the revue. $45. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Douglas Fairbanks Theater, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. $47.50–$50. Mon. and Tues at 8, Wed. at 2:30 and 8, Fri at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

I Will Come Back—A new musical celebrating Judy Garland's life. Written and directed by Timothy Gray, an associate of the diva; starring Tommy Femia, a cabaret performer who's made a healthy living out of impersonating her. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (239-6200).*

Joseph Gabriel Magic—Magician Joseph Gabriel mixes sleights of hand with large-scale illusions. $25–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Macbeth—Is that a dagger Alec Baldwin sees before him? Or is it Angela Bassett, sharpening her nails? Or George C. Wolfe, shouting stage directions? $40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2. Through 3/29. *The Public Theater's Martinson Hall, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Mindgames—Marc Salem, a mentalist and former director of research for *Sesame Street,* does a slew of fancy math tricks, stops his own pulse, and predicts the contents of people's wallets. $40. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2, 7, and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

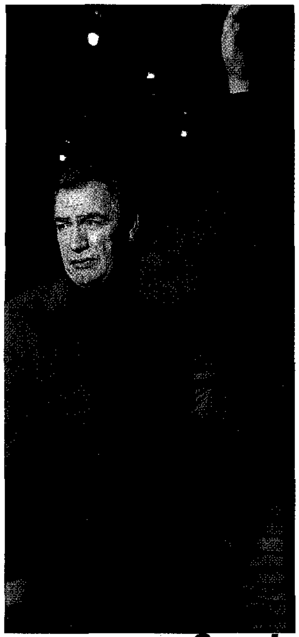
Mizlansky/Zilinsky or "Schmucks"—A new comedy from John Robin Baitz about a pair of Hollywood hustlers' last-ditch effort to seal a deal. Nathan Lane, fresh from Los Angeles, where he evaded mice and other vermin, plays one of the two title schmucks; Joe Mantello, the talented young actor who directed Neil Simon's *Proposals,* directs here, too. $47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. *Manhattan Theatre Club, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Mystery School—Tyne Daly, the powerhouse actress who nearly out-Etheled Ethel Merman in the 1989 revival of *Gypsy*, gets the stage all to herself in this site-specific production from En Garde Arts and Long Wharf Theatre. This time, the space is the gorgeous Angel Orensanz Center, the oldest surviving synagogue in Manhattan, and the theme, appropriately, is spirituality. Through portraits of five female characters—an academic, a recovering alcoholic, a Christian fundamentalist, an archaeologist's widow, and a cable-access talk-show host—Daly shows how adaptive human beings, not to mention fine actresses, can be. Written by Paul Selig. $32.50–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 4/19. *Angel Orensanz Foundation Center for the Arts, 172 Norfolk St. (239-6200).*

Never the Sinner—The sensational story of Leopold and Loeb—two wealthy, well-educated teenagers who in 1924 murdered a young boy on a whim—moves from the American Jewish Theatre, where it played to great acclaim earlier this season, to a home further uptown. $25–$45. Mon. at 8, Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Pride's Crossing—One of our subtlest playwrights (Tina Howe) and one of our most incisive performers (Cherry Jones) have combined talents to give us this delicate, minor-key memory play. It rehearses the life of Mabel Tidings Bigelow from 10 to 90 in seemingly random order, the way reality and remembrance play hopscotch with each other. Mabel is a quirky, headstrong nonagenarian, a New England matriarch whose high point was being the first woman to swim the English Channel the harder way, from England to France. Cherry Jones has to be seen to be believed—if then. (Simon: 12/22/97.) $50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Through 4/5. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*



Opening Pan This!

It took a lot of moxie for Conor McPherson to make a theater critic—a jealous, self-loathing, eminently corruptible theater critic—the sole character in *St. Nicholas.* He was goading the London press not only to rip the play apart but also to dismiss him, then a 25-year-old writer, as a belligerent little twerp. Instead, the critics loved the show, and they loved Brian Cox (pictured), who plays the surly old hack. It opens here on March 17 at Primary Stages.

R & J—A four-man, prop-free version of *Romeo and Juliet* that will likely stand out among the tragedy's many newfangled interpretations. $40. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (354-2220).*

Richard II and Richard III—Are presented in rotating repertory by the always estimable Theater for a New Audience. A company of eighteen actors plays 60 roles; Ron Daniels directs. $37.50 per *Richard.* Schedule varies. *Through 4/5. Playhouse at St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. (279-4200).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, this show by a number of hands pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan, from lost baggage to lost illusions, from Hertz to other hurts and frustrations. Nothing is overlooked, though some things are a mite undercooked. Even the Ca*th*tilian li*th*p ge*th* a tuneful *th*ong tribute. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $42.50–$47.50; optional dinner one hour before curtain. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 10/30/97. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

Shopping and Fucking—And how these two pursuits intersect in the lives of five young Londoners. The play, by newcomer Mark Ravenhill, was a sensation last year in the West End; it opens here with a homegrown cast. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. Through 4/11. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (460-5475).*

Side Man—Warren Leight, the son of an itinerant trumpet player, wrote this drama as a means of both reproaching and honoring his father, whose never-ending quest for big-band work left the family untended for long stretches at a time. Michael Mayer directs. $20. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 5. Through 3/29. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (279-4200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. $24.50–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.,* then a reception at *Vinnie's, 147 Waverly Pl.,* with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(239-6200).*

Two Pianos, Four Hands—Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt, a pair of talented pianists who never made it to the recital halls, wax philosophical about pushy parents and smug concert judges. $40–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Opened 10/30/97. *Promenade Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Visiting Mr. Green—Eli Wallach, who made his Broadway debut more than a half-century ago, stars in this new comedy about a relationship between a young man and an older Jewish widower. $35–$45. Written by Jeff Baron; directed by Lonny Price. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (505-0700).*

Kerr *continued from page 26*

other people tell me, 'Thank you so much for the lowdown on flap reconstruction.' "

"I'm hoping, now that they have an editor, that they attack some of the myths about the disease and don't turn into just a pink-ribbon magazine, which they were at the beginning," says Fran Visco, president of the National Breast Cancer Coalition. One of Darien's first moves was to buy a two-part piece by Helen Caldicott, the founder of Physicians for Social Responsibility, about the links between radiation, environmental toxins, and cancer. Darien also hired the star literary critic Eve Sedgwick to write an advice column—called "Off My Chest"—drawing on her experience as a breast-cancer survivor.

Poz, too, may find this to be the time to rework its image. The story of Strub's health—much improved, and thus inevitably less compelling from a journalistic point of view—sums up the challenge *Poz* faces today: As the AIDS panic recedes, what's the lure of a magazine about HIV?

Strub's answer is that if the outlook is more hopeful these days, it's also more uncertain. AIDS patients still have to negotiate a daily regimen of unpredictable and unbelievably costly drugs, and they face the scary prospect that the virus will develop a new resistance. He sees *Poz* beginning to cut back on the fluffier profiles and commissioning more investigative stories—about prisoners with HIV, for example, and about the shortcomings of the new miracle treatments. Those pieces could well test the hands-off policies of the folks who pay his bills, though Strub insists his advertisers are too sophisticated to attempt to interfere with the magazine's editorial content.

It would be an interesting twist on media trends if *Poz,* like *Mamm,* went against the current of ever-softer celebrity-driven features, using the tragic fact of its niche market to publish more urgent journalism. But how far can Strub go? The basic philosophy of *Poz* still comes across as one of empowerment, and a big part of empowerment is helping people feel good. Strub himself laid out the dilemma in a recent editor's greeting to his readers: "At its inception, *Poz* was often accused of cruelly dangling the unrealistic prospect of survival before the desperate eyes of doomed, terminally ill souls certain to die horrific deaths. Now that some measure of survival is available to many people with HIV, don't be surprised if *Poz* is soon accused of becoming a belligerent, self-centered voice for the ungrateful." ▬

Photograph by James Leynse.

art

Robert Capa...Perspectives on Patterning

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Judith Cotton—Recent paintings that depict rowers in boats, alone and in groups; through 4/11. Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767).

Jean Fautrier—Paintings that depict still life and nudes set in a looming color space, by this seminal French artist (1898–1964) whose works were admired by Mark Rothko; through 4/11. Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (988-1623).

Sam Francis—Biomorphic abstract paintings produced early in the artist's career, 1959–61, when he was preoccupied almost exclusively with the exploration of blue; through 3/31. Gray, 1018 Madison Ave. (472-8787).

Giambologna—Bronze, terra-cotta, and marble sculptures by the Mannerist sculptor (1529–1608) who worked in Florence for the Medici family, from the collection of Michael Hall; through 4/4. Salander O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (879-6606).

Adolph Gottlieb—A selection of the artist's pictographs of the forties and early fifties from the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation; through 4/4. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (794-0550).

Lester Johnson—Recent paintings based on sketches made by the artist during the summer in southern France and in East Hampton, through 4/4, at Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave. (924-0858), and Cadé, 1045 Madison Ave. (734-3670).

Sherry Kerlin—Oil and ink drawings based on photographs; through 4/11. Winston Wächter, 39 E. 78th St. (327-2526).

Daniel Ludwig—Recent figurative paintings and drawings; through 4/11. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (988-6870).

Esteban Vicente—Abstract Expressionist paintings from the fifties and recent paintings and collages; 3/20–4/18. Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. (744-2300).

57th Street Area

Theresa Bernstein—A survey of figurative paintings by this 108-year-old artist who was a member of the Philadelphia Ten, a group of women artists that formed in 1917 in response to the male-dominated Eight, later called the Ashcan School; through 4/18. Whalen, 24 W. 57th St. (397-9700).

Johan Creten/Robert Greene—Terra-cotta torsos covered with ceramic roses/New paintings of landscapes populated with metaphorical dogs and people. Through 3/28. Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (980-5454).

John Ferren—Abstract paintings made when the artist was living in Paris between 1931 and 1939; through 4/25. Snyder, 20 W. 57th St. (262-1160).

Mary Frank—Triptych paintings that evoke the religious panels of the Middle Ages; through 4/4. Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (247-2111).

Kathryn Freeman—Paintings of allegorical interiors with figures; through 3/31. Tatischeff, 50 W. 57th St. (664-0907).

Andrew Gellatly—Abstract paintings in oil and ink that suggest atmospheric occurrences and vast distances; through 4/1. McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. (956-3366).

Carolyn Plochman—Figurative paintings that suggest illuminated manuscripts; through 4/11. Kennedy, 730 Fifth Ave. (541-9600).

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Mon. through Fri. from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Anne Ryan/Leon Goldin—Paintings of women/Large-scale abstract paintings. Through 4/4. Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave. (307-5730).

George Segal—Pastel and charcoal portraits of the sculptor's family and friends and studies of beef hanging in Manhattan's meat market; through 4/4. Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (586-0110).

Mary June Waid/Hugo Bastidas—Paintings and pastels that depict fragments of the human form/New paintings; 3/18–4/18. Haime, 41 E. 57th St. (888-3550).

Paul Waldman—Recent paintings of figures in reductive landscapes; through 3/28. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Helen Miranda Wilson—New paintings that depict the sky from the perspective of looking upward; through 4/9. McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (319-1996).

Sandy Winters—New large-scale multimedia installations; through 3/28. Adams, 41 W. 57th St. (644-5665).

Timothy Woodman—New painted aluminum-relief sculptures; through 4/18. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Nancy Arlen—Cast-glass sculptures from the seventies and early eighties; through 4/2. Algus, 25 Thompson St. (966-1758).

Howard Buchwald/Gregory Raymond Halili—Oil paintings from the seventies and acrylic paintings from the past four years/Miniature gouache paintings of patterned fabrics and landscapes. Through 4/15. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (966-6676).

John Chamberlain—Two monumental painted steel sculptures; through 4/25. Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St. (431-9224).

Ellen Gallagher—New paintings that incorporate a vocabulary of marks and symbols; through 4/11. Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. (228-2828).

Augustus Goertz/Macyn Bolt—Recent abstract paintings by both; through 4/11. Foster, 62 Crosby St. (966-9024).

Karlo Kacharava—Expressionistic drawings and paintings by this Georgian artist and art critic (1964–1994) who brought together Moscow and Tbilisi artistic circles; through 4/4. Goldstein, 39 Wooster St. (431-0314).

Jenifer Kobylarz—New paintings that depict motifs of spinelike organic forms; through 4/4. Thorp, 103 Prince St. (431-6880).

Gerald L. Moore—New paintings; through 4/4. Donahue/Sosinski, 560 Broadway (226-1111).

John L. Moore—Paintings of ellipsoid shapes hovering in color fields; through 4/4. M-13, 72 Greene St. (925-3007).

Elizabeth Olbert—Painted freestanding objects and wall-mounted pieces that take New England as their focus; through 4/4. Golden, 39 Wooster St. (274-0080).

Stephen Pace—Abstract paintings from the fifties; through 4/8. Perlow, 560 Broadway (941-1220).

Rubén Torres-Llorca—Sculptures of rocking chairs, ladders, wooden houses, animals, and parts of the body; through 4/25. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2093).

Brian Wall—Recent abstract steel sculptures; through 4/25. Lowinsky, 578 Broadway (226-5440).

Chelsea

Vito Acconci—Three new installations that were first made in 1974-75; through 4/1. Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (206-9300).

Ricci Albenda—Word paintings on aluminum panels; through 4/4. Kreps, 529 W. 20th St. (761-8849).

Matthew Benedict—Works in gouache on paper, embroideries, and stencil works; through 4/25. Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (367-7474).

Charlie Hewitt—New sculpture and mixed-media works on paper and canvas; through 4/5. Kempner, 501 W. 23rd St. (206-6872).

David Ivie/Matt Marello—Small-scale paintings of mysterious scenes/Video and film stills of old disaster movies into which the artist has

Photography

War and Peace

When Robert Capa stepped on a land mine in Indochina in 1954, America lost not only its most intrepid and glamorous war photographer but one of its most sophisticated portraitists. The retrospective "Robert Capa: Photographs" rounds up the lensman's most dazzling works in both genres. At the International Center of Photography Midtown, 1133 Sixth Avenue, at 43rd Street; through June 7.

Photograph by Robert Capa.

inserted himself as a character. Through 4/4. Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (741-3318).

Ronald Jones—Sculptural versions of furniture with historic associations; through 4/11. Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. (206-7100).

Alain Kirili—Three sculptures from the artist's ongoing *Commandments* series; through 3/28. Marlborough Chelsea, 211 W. 19th St. (463-8634).

Sharon Louden—Gestural drawings; through 4/4. Anderson, 453 W. 17th St. (463-0970).

Lovett/Codagnone—Recent collaborative photographs; through 4/12. XL, 504 W. 22nd St. (462-4111).

Alice Neel/August Sander—Paintings from the fifties through the seventies that depict men in suits and have not been previously exhibited/Photographs of businessmen, entrepreneurs, and industrialists from the twenties and thirties. Through 4/25. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727).

Bruce Sargeant/Mark Beard—Portraits of English and Continental gentry painted between the two world wars/Hand-colored Polaroid transfer prints of the artist's family and friends. Through 4/5. Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (242-8811).

Mark Sheinkman/Meg Webster—Sculptural paintings/New large-format and black-and-white photographs of farm animals. Through 4/18. Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. (243-3753).

Clemens Weiss—A ten-foot-tall cathedral of glass cases filled with drawings and stacked on metal shelves; through 4/30. Great Modern Pictures, 17 W. 24th St. (242-2581).

Other

Bernard Chaet—Paintings of landscapes and seascapes in Cape Ann, Massachusetts; through 4/4. New York Studio School, 8 W. 8th St. (673-6466).

Steve Keene—New works by this artist who makes between 40 and 50 paintings a day and sells them for five to ten dollars each; through 3/27. CBGB's 313, 313 Bowery St. (677-0455).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

China Institute—125 E. 65th St. (627-4424). "Scent of Ink," 50 masterworks of Chinese painting, with hand scrolls, hanging scrolls, and album leaves; through 6/20.

Friedman—32 E. 67th St. (794-8950). "The Art of Turning: Masters in Wood," an exhibition with works by Holzapfel, Horn, Hoyer, Kent, others; through 4/25.

Gagosian—980 Madison Ave. (744-2313). "The New York School," with works by De Kooning, Gorky, Kline, Newman, others; through 4/25.

Shapolsky—152 E. 65th St. (452-1094). "Earthly Delights," with works by Johnson, Miles, Slonem, Waitzkin; through 5/31.

57th Street Area

Clark—24 W. 57th St. (246-2205). Ceramic works by Kitamura, Nadelman, Wood; through 4/4.

Equitable Gallery—787 Seventh Ave. (554-4818), Mon.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 12–5. "The Dutch in the Americas, 1600–1800," with rare prints, maps, and illustrated books from the John Carter Brown Library; through 4/4.

Yoshii—20 W. 57th St. (265-8876). "Giacometti and Japanese Sculpture;" through 4/25.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Art in General—79 Walker St. (219-0473). "Scale, Relatively Speaking," with works by Abrahamson, Andrus, Burns, Engler, others; through 4/4.

The Drawing Center—35 Wooster St. (219-2166). Drawings by Buckley, Chagoya, Christie, Coen, others; through 3/28.

Exit Art/The First World—548 Broadway (966-7745). "WILD," with works that explore the boundaries of traditional media by Brody, Closson, Cohen, Currie, and others; through 3/29.

Goldstrom—560 Broadway (941-9175). "Black and White," with works by Matisse, Picasso, Heckel, Kirchner, others; through 4/1.

Henry Street Settlement—466 Grand St. (598-0400). "Settlement Installations: Ain't It Funky Now," with works by Beens, Chamizo, Cullen, Eder, others; through 3/29.

Kasmin—74 Grand St. (219-3219). An exhibition of works by Puckette, Rubins, McClelland; through 4/18.

Kent—67 Prince St. (966-4500). "A Delicate Condition," with works by Applebroog, Bing, Cusick, Dickson, others; through 4/25.

Lehmann Maupin—39 Greene St. (965-0753). An exhibition of contemporary Chinese art, exploring the unique trajectory of China's cultural, social, and political past; through 4/18.

Schickler—560 Broadway (431-6363). "Art and the New Order: Photographs and Drawings of the European Avant-Garde, 1913–1923," will focus on the work of early modernist artists from Russia and Italy.; through 4/18.

Thread Waxing Space—476 Broadway (966-9520). "Archigram: Experimental Architecture, 1961–74," with more than 400 drawings, models, multimedia installations, magazines, and re-created environments; through 4/25.

Tilton—49 Greene St. (941-1775). "Esperanto '98," a test of the theory of art as a universal language, with works by Sangar, Tuggar, Tzaig, and Zhijie; through 4/10.

Chelsea

Elder—529 W. 20th St. (462-2600). "Decorative, Functional, and Sculptural Objects for the Garden," with works by Calyer, Swanson, Godowsky, Tannen, others; through 5/2.

Greene Naftali—526 W. 26th St. (463-7770). "Super Freaks: Post Pop & the New Generation"; through 4/18.

Marks—523 W. 24th St. (243-0200). "Maverick," new sculpture, photography, drawing, painting, and video from Bustamante, Fischli, Fritsch, Horn, others; through 4/11.

Rare—435 W. 14th St. (645-5591). "California Current," with works by Colson, Ellis, Giffin, Hoff, others; through 4/14.

Photography

Edouard-Denis Baldus—Ten rare salt prints made by the photographer in 1855 to commemorate the state visit of Queen Victoria to the Exposition Universelle in Paris that year; through 4/18. Klotz Photocollect, 22 E. 72nd St. (327-2211).

Cecil Beaton—Portraits, still life, and fashion work by the English photographer (1925–1967); through 4/18. Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (966-6223).

Andrew Bush—A fifteen-year survey of photographs, including works from the series "Bonnettstown Hall," "Vector Portraits," "Envelopes," and "Business Cards"; through 4/4. Saul, 560 Broadway (431-0747).

Charles Hagen—New color photographs in which the artist's 4-year-old daughter is a primary subject; through 4/26. Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave. (242-7767).

Robert Cumming—A survey of the artist's photographs of architecture based on nautical motifs; through 4/4. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Andreas Feininger—Photographs of urban and industrial landscapes from the thirties through the eighties; through 4/12. SoHo Triad, 107 Grand St. (965-9500).

Generous Miracles—529 W. 20th St. (352-2858). Conceptual photographs by eleven artists of Cuban origin; through 3/31.

Jindrich Heisler—Surrealist photomontages and manipulated photographs by the Czech poet and artist (1914–1953); through 4/4. Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (794-4444).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1777), Tues. 11–8 (voluntary contribution 6–8), Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $5.50, $4 students and seniors. "Micha Bar-Am: An Israeli Photobiography." Images of life in Israel by its premier photojournalist; through 5/31.

ICP Midtown—1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (860-1777), Tues. 11–8 (6–8 admission by voluntary donation), Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $5.50, $4. "Robert Capa/Photographs." A retrospective of the legendary photojournalist (1913–1954) known for his images of the Spanish Civil War, the North African and European battles of WW II, the Israeli War for Independence, and the end of the French Indochina War, and for his portraits of artists and writers; through 6/7.

Alexander Liberman—Portraits of artists, writers, dancers, and others by the artist, sculptor, and former editorial director of all Condé Nast magazines; through 4/18. Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. (517-3755).

Anne Arden McDonald—Portraits of couples and group portraits; through 4/25. Rice, 325 W. 11th St. (366-6660).

Ralph Eugene Meatyard—Vintage prints from the photographer's estate; through 4/25. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

Miller—138 Spring St. (226-1220). Photographs of Vietnam by Burrows, Conner, Epstein, An-My Le, Robinson; through 4/11.

Tokihiro Sato—Photographs of urban scenes and bucolic landscapes that fuse conceptualism with straight topographic documentation; through 4/25. Tonkonow, 601 W. 26th St. (255-8450).

Aaron Siskind—Photographs made between 1956 and 1978 from the collection of Golda Lewis; through 4/11. Carr, 478 W. Broadway (673-5518).

David Smith—Photographs taken by the sculptor between 1931 and 1965, of arrangements of found objects, New York City, the landscape around his studio in Bolton Landing, New York, and his sculptures; through 4/18. Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (243-0200).

Paul Strand—Photographs that Strand took of his garden during the final years of his life at his home in Orgeval, France, many of which have not been previously exhibited or published; through 4/4. Aperture's Burden Gallery, 20 E. 23rd St. (505-5555).

Susan Unterberg—Color photographs of landscapes in upstate New York and of the homes of the photographer's fellow artists and friends; through 4/4. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

Ed van der Elsken—Black-and-white vintage photographs documenting Paris's café scene of the fifties; through 4/25. 292, 120 Wooster St. (431-0292).

William Wegman—New Polaroid prints and editioned digital ink-jet prints that depict the artist's dogs with a new simplicity of form suggestive of Classical statuary; through 4/25. Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (759-7999).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Paper + Finland = Art." Works on paper by contemporary Finnish artists; through 5/10. . . . "Expressions in Wood: Masterworks From the Wornick Collection." Turned and shaped wood artworks by 56 artists from the United States, Europe, and Australia, drawn from the collection of Anita and Ron Wornick; through 5/10. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Sacred Mountains of the World." Color photographs of revered mountains around the world; through 3/31. . . . "The Nature of Diamonds." An exhibition exploring all aspects of the mineral, from its geological origins to its place in history, art, adornment, and literature, featuring significant gems from around the world; through 4/26. . . . "Drawing Shadows to Stone: Photographing North Pacific Peoples, 1897–1902." A commemoration of the American Museum of Natural History's Jesup North Pacific Expedition of 1897–1902, including approximately 100 archival photographs of scenes from daily life; through 5/31. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society—"Great Cities, Small Treasures: The Ancient World of the Indus Valley." Over 100 examples of sculpture, ceramics, metalwork, seals, and other artifacts made by inhabitants of the Indus River Valley between 2600 B.C.E. and 1900 B.C.E., drawn primarily from collections in Pakistan; through 5/3. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-

ASIA), Tues.–Sat. 11–6, Sun. 12–5, Thurs. 11–8 (6–8 free admission); $4, $2 seniors and students.

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts—"Finnish Modernism in Design: Utopian Ideals and Everyday Ideals, 1930–1997." A survey of works produced by Finnish designers for the ceramics firm Arabia, the glass factories of iittala, Karhula, and Nuutajarvi, and the texile and clothing manufacturer Marimekko; through 6/14. 18 W. 86th St. (501-3000), Tues.–Sun. 11–5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 seniors and students.

Bronx Museum of the Arts—"Transforming the Crown: African, Asian, and Caribbean Artists in Britain, 1966–1996." A survey of Black British art that is being held in collaboration with the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center (see photography listings) and the Studio Museum in Harlem; through 3/15. . . . "The Picnic: An Installation by Ernesto Pujol"; through 3/15. 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. 3–9, Thurs. and Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $3 suggested donation; $2 students; $1 senior citizens, children under 12 free.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Jewels of the Romanovs: Treasures of the Russian Imperial Court." 250 objects and works of art spanning three centuries of the Romanov Dynasty, among them royal portraits, court gowns, military uniforms, and a selection of Crown Jewels; 3/20–7/5. . . . "Joan Snyder: Working in Brooklyn." Works on paper from the past decade; through 6/14. . . . "Scattered Petals, Fallen Leaves, Shards of Glass: The Work of Bing Hu, Working in Brooklyn." An exhibition of sixteen sculptures that incorporate material found on the streets of Brooklyn by the Chinese artist; through 5/10. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–9, Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum Smithsonian Institution—"The Jewels of Lalique." A retrospective of jewelry by the French art Nouveau artist-designer; through 4/12. . . . "Arquitectonica: The Times Square Project." The first New York exhibition of photographs, models, and drawings by the Miami-based architectural firm, highlighting its plans for a hotel, entertainment, and retail complex at 42nd Street and Eighth Avenue; through 5/10. 2 E. 91st St. (849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5. Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (free admission 5–9); $3, $1.50 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"Training an Artist: Alexandre Cabanel and the Academic Process in Nineteenth-Century France." Paintings and drawings by the nineteenth-century French artist; through 6/13. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Tracey Moffatt: *Free-falling*." A group of 25 photographs and a video installation by the Australian artist and filmmaker; through 6/14. . . . "Richard Serra: *Torqued Ellipses*." Three monumental sculptures of Cor-Ten steel that explore the shaping of space rather than material as their primary subject; through 6/14. . . . "Dan Flavin: 1962/63, 1970, 1996." Three installations using fluorescent light and six separate fluorescent works by the late sculptor; through 6/14. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio—"Diamantina Gonzalez: Recurrent Memories." A site-specific installation about the relationship between time, space, and memory; through 3/29. . . . "Taíno: Pre-Columbian Art and Culture From the Caribbean." The first comprehensive survey of the art of the Taíno, the dominant culture in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica, and the Bahamas from about 1200 A.D. to the arrival of Columbus in 1492; through 5/3. . . . "Brian Nissen, Chinampas: A Vision of the Floating Gardens of Xochimilco." Bronze, ceramic, and wood sculpture and mixed-media assemblages based on the form of *chinampas*, artificial islands originally created by the Aztecs for agricultural purposes; through 3/29. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272); Wed.–Sun. 11–5, Thurs. 12–7; $4, $2 seniors and students.

Frick Collection—"Robert Adam, The Creative Mind: From the Sketch to the Finished Drawing." Sixty-six drawings and watercolors by the renowned eighteenth-century architect Robert Adam, his brother and partner, James, and artists employed in their office that were selected from the 9,000 Adam drawings acquired by Sir John Soane in 1833; through 4/5. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Shiro Kuramata 1934–1991." Furniture and objects by one of postwar Japan's most influential designers; through 5/2. 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Wed. 11–8, Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–5; $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"China: 5,000 Years." More than 500 artworks and artifacts from seventeen provinces of China; through 6/3. . . . "After *Mountains and Sea*: Frankenthaler 1956–1959." A survey of the artist's early paintings, including her groundbreaking *Mountains and Sea* of 1952, which laid the stylistic groundwork for her subsequent works; through 5/3. . . . "Visions of Paris: Robert Delauney's Series." An exhibition focusing on the artist's series paintings of Saint-Séverin, the Eiffel Tower, and Paris as seen through his window; through 5/24. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 seniors and students.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"China: 5,000 Years"; through 5/25. 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500), Sun. and Wed.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–8 (6–8 pay what you wish); $8, $5 seniors and students.

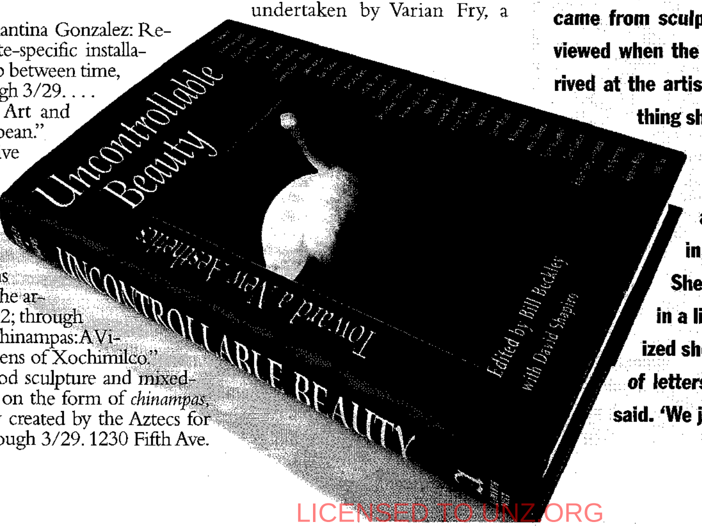
Jewish Museum—"Still More Distant Journeys: The Artistic Emigrations of Lasar Segall." The first major United States retrospective of the preeminent Brazilian artist (1891–1957) who was a major contributor to the development of German Expressionism and Brazilian modernist painting; Through 5/10. . . . ASSIGNMENT: RESCUE, The Story of Varian Fry and the Emergency Rescue Committee." The story behind the 1940–41 rescue mission undertaken by Varian Fry, a New York–based Frenchman who arranged safe passage out of France for many anti-Nazi artists, writers, scientists, and political refugees; through 3/29. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5; free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Paul Strand circa 1916." An exhibition of 50 rare prints tracing the artist's transition from soft-focus pictorial style to modernism; through 5/31. . . . "Augustin Pajou, Royal Sculptor." The first comprehensive exhibition of the work of the eighteenth-century French sculptor; through 5/24. . . . "Pierre-Paul Prud'hon." The first American retrospective of the

In Print

The Beauty Part

Not so long ago, artists routinely aspired to beauty. That *was before Pop Art, Minimalism, and Conceptual art* muddied the waters—by the seventies, beauty in contemporary art was cause for suspicion, a sign of lack of seriousness. More recently, Bill Beckley, an artist and teacher of semiotics at the School of Visual Arts, noticed that the word seemed to have disappeared from critical discourse altogether. "I was teaching John Ruskin and Walter Pater and trying to contrast their different approaches to aesthetics—Ruskin associated beauty with morality whereas Pater separated beauty from goodness," Beckley says. "But the concept of beauty was something they both took for granted. Certain postmodern critics take the position that beauty has been co-opted by advertising, so their strategy is to negate it in art." While scanning the shelves of an antiquarian bookstore, Beckley came across an old anthology of writings on beauty by Aristotle, Wordsworth, Santayana, and others, and was inspired to edit his own anthology on the subject. So, with the help of his friend David Shapiro, he's gathered nineteen existing essays on beauty by critics and artists whose writing he admires (Dave Hickey, Arthur Danto, Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe, Peter Schjeldahl, and Agnes Martin, to name a few); commissioned new pieces (by Robert C. Morgan, Carter Ratcliff, Marjorie Welish, and others); and tracked down the entire heated public debate that took place between critic Thomas McEvilley and MOMA's Kirk Varnedoe and William Rubin over the 1984 MOMA exhibition " 'Primitivism' in Twentieth-Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern." But the most unexpectedly Classical view in *Uncontrollable Beauty: Toward a New Aesthetics* (Allworth Press; $24.95) came from sculptor Louise Bourgeois, whom Beckley interviewed when the collection was nearly finished. When he arrived at the artist's Chelsea home, Beckley recalls, "the first thing she said was 'I never speak about beauty.' Then she walked into the other room and came back with a little plastic bag filled with metal letters, letters that were on her front door in Paris before she moved to New York in 1938. She spilled them out and started arranging them in a line. The first was *L*, and then an *O*, and I realized she was spelling *Louise*. 'Here we had just a pile *of letters, but meaning was there all the time,' she* said. 'We just had to find the order.' " **Edith Newhall**



Photograph by Steven Freeman.

works of the eighteenth-century French court painter and draftsman; through 6/7. . . . "The Nature of Islamic Ornament, Part I: Calligraphy." An exhibition surveying the development of Islamic calligraphy; through 6/28. . . . "When Silk Was Gold: Central Asian and Chinese Textiles in the Metropolitan and Cleveland Museums of Art"; through 5/17. . . . "Evocative Fragments." A selection of twentieth-century paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs depicting fragments of the human body; through 6/14. . . . "Gianni Versace." A tribute to the late designer that reveals the influence of art on his fashion and theater designs; through 3/22. . . . "Honoré Lannuier, Parisian Cabinet Maker in Federal New York"; through 6/14. . . . "Elegant China Ware: Paris Porcelain in America"; through 6/14. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum at F.I.T.—"Norman Norell." The first retrospective of the American designer (1900–1972) known for his tailoring perfection; through 4/18. . . . "Toledo/Toledo: A Marriage of Art and Fashion." Approximately 100 pieces of clothing designed by Isabel Toledo, and paintings, fashion illustrations, sketches, sculptures, and mannequins by her husband, Ruben Toledo; through 4/25. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-5966), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

Museum for African Art—"African Faces, African Figures: The Arman Collection." African sculptures from the collection of the sculptor Armand P. Arman; through 4/19. 593 Broadway, bet. Houston and Prince Sts. (966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $2.50 seniors, students, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Self-Taught Artists of the 20th Century: Perspectives on Patterning." A survey of works by five self-taught artists whose oeuvres are characterized by a consistent use of overall patterning, including Morris Hirshfeld, Leroy Person, Martin Ramirez, Eugene Von Bruenchenhein, and Joseph Yoakum; through 6/7. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Chuck Close." A retrospective of paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs by the American artist known for his monumental, psychologically charged portraits of artists and anonymous sitters; through 5/26. . . . "Alvar Aalto: Between Humanism and Materialism." The first United States retrospective of the works of the renowned Finnish architect, designer, and town planner, including sketches and competition drawings, models, new and archival photographs, and examples of furniture and glass; through 5/19. . . . "Fernand Léger." A retrospective of paintings and drawings by the French artist (1881–1955) from his early series "Contrastes de Formes (1913–14)," the first fully abstract works to emerge from Cubism, through his last realist paintings of construction workers of the late forties and early fifties; through 5/12. . . . "Fabrications." An exhibition developed jointly by MOMA, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Wexner Center for the Arts, comprising a total of twelve installations simultaneously constructed at all three venues by architects and architectural teams; through 4/28. . . . "The Clutter of Happenstance: Photographs by Robert Cumming." Photographs of ordinary objects in tableaux of the artist's devising, made between 1969 and 1981; 3/19–6/15. . . . "Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons: Spoken Softly With Mama." A site-specific installation exploring the artist's African-Cuban roots; through 5/26. . . . "Rethinking the Modern: Three Proposals for the Museum of Modern Art." Design proposals for the expansion and renovation of the Museum of Modern Art, featuring the work of the Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi, who was chosen in December 1997 to design MOMA's expansion and renovation, and by the Swiss architectural firm Herzog & deMeuron, and the New York–based architect Bernard Tschumi; through 4/28. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Berenice Abbott's Changing New York, 1935–1939." A selection of 175 prints from the museum's own collection of the photographer's "Changing New York" project of the thirties that was funded by the Federal Art Project of the W.P.A. and sponsored by the museum; through 6/21. . . . "Bridging New York." An exhibition of paintings, prints, drawings, postcards, and vintage photographs exploring the role played by bridges in the creation of Greater New York; through 6/28. . . . "New York From Above: An Aerial View." Paintings depicting aerial views of the city by Spelman Evans Downer; through 6/14. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

National Academy Museum & School of the Fine Arts—"The 173rd Annual Exhibition"; through 3/21. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880); Wed.–Sun. 12–5 (Fri. until 8); $5, $3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.

National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institution—"Memory and Imagination: The Legacy of Maidu Indian Artist Frank Day." Works by the first self-taught Native American painter in California to depict customs of his tribe; through 5/3. George Gustav Heye Center, 1 Bowling Green (514-3888), 10–5 daily, Thurs. to 8; free.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Doris Salcedo." New sculpture by the Colombian artist; 3/19–5/31. . . . "Cardoso Flea Circus." A miniature flea circus accompanied by a video documenting a performance piece; through 5/10. 583 Broadway (219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs., Fri., and Sat. 12–8, (free Thurs. 6–8); $5, $3 students, artists, and seniors, free for youths 18 and under.

New York Public Library—"A Secret Location on the Lower East Side: Adventures in Writing, 1960–1980." An exhibition focusing on the writers, artists, publishers, and communities who produced publications associated with the use of the mimeograph machine from the sixties through the early eighties; through 7/25. . . . "Subject Matters: Photography, Romana Javitz, and the New York Public Library." The story of the visionary curator Romana Javitz, who during her 39-year tenure (1929–1968), built the Picture Collection at the New York Public Library into a world-renowned resource of documentary photography; through 3/28. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"John Coplans: A Self-Portrait"; through 3/29. . . . "Jackie Winsor: Sculpture"; through 4/12. . . . "10 Years Portikus, Frankfurt, Germany"; through 4/12. . . . "Matthew McCaslin, Susan Etkin, Michael Joo"; through 4/12. . . . "Installations/Projects—Siah Armajani, Per Barclay, Shane Cullen, and Philip Napier"; through 4/12. . . . "Vertical Painting Show"; through 6/28. . . . "Wish You Luck." 22nd National and International Studio Program Exhibition; through 4/19. . . . "Meg Webster 'Pool' "; through 6/28. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave. (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $4 suggested donation, $2 students and seniors.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"A Seal Upon Thine Heart: Glyptic Art of the Ancient Near East, ca. 3500–2100 B.C." A selection of seals from the Library's collection and from the Yale Babylonian Collection, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and several private collections; through 4/26. . . . "To Observe and Imagine: British Drawings and Watercolors, 1600–1900"; through 5/3. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $6; $4 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Transforming the Crown: African, Asian, and Caribbean Artists in Britain, 1966–1996." A survey of Black British art that is being held in collaboration with the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center (see photography listings) and the Bronx Museum of the Arts; through 3/15. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 seniors and students.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Bill Viola." The first full-scale overview of the work of the California-based video artist, including 15 installations, 25 videotapes, and drawings and notebooks from the past 25 years; through 5/10. . . . "Arthur Dove: A Retrospective." Paintings, assemblages, pastels, and drawings by the pioneering American modernist; through 4/12. . . . "Collection in Context: 1948." A multimedia exhibition surveying important artwork, music, film, and news footage from that year; through 3/15. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $7 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"*Garden of Qián*, by Ming Fay." A fantasy garden of tree and fruits handcrafted from paper, wire, synthetic fibers, and layers of polyurethane; through 4/17. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.–Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

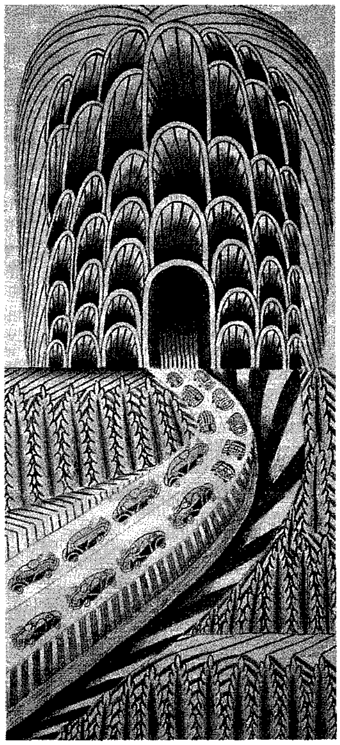
Christie's—502 Park Ave. (546-1000). 3/18 at 10: "The Haskell F. Nonnan Library of Science and Medicine." On view from 3/13. 3/19 at 10 and 2: "French and Continental Furniture." On view from 3/14. 3/24 at 10: "Fine Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy." On view from 3/21.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). 3/18 at 1: "Old Master Paintings." On view from 3/14. 3/24 at 1: "Asian Decorative Arts." On view from 3/20.

Phillips—406 E. 79th St. (570-4830). 3/20 at 10:30: "Twentieth-Century Decorative Arts." On view from 3/13.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 3/18 at 10:15 and 2: "Nineteenth-Century Paintings." On view from 3/14. 3/20 at 10:15 and 2: "Continental Furniture." On view from 3/14. 3/23 at 10:15 "Chinese Paintings." On view from 3/19. 3/23 at 2: "Snuff Bottles." On view from 3/19. 3/24 at 10:15 and 2: "Chinese Works of Art." On view from 3/19.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 3/19 at 10:30: "Performing Arts." On view from 3/14.



On View "Self-Taught Artists of the 20th Century: Perspectives on Patterning" explores the use of all-over patterning in the works of Morris Hirshfield, Leroy Person, Martin Ramirez (left, *Untitled*), Eugene Von Bruenchenhein, and Joseph Yoakum. At the Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Avenue and 66th Street; through June 7.

Photograph courtesy of the Museum of American Folk Art.

restaurants

Sweets Under Glass...Mesa City...Felidia

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Arqua—Traditional Northern Italian fare—think homemade pastas, octopus salad, Venetian shellfish soup—served in a dining room that is as spare and elegant as downtown gets. Owner Leo Pulito has an impressive wine cellar. *281 Church St. (334-1888). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Cellar in the Sky—This oenophile's dream changes its menu, and its well-chosen wine pairings, monthly; the one constant is the spectacular view. Four courses of creatively prepared, seasonal American fare costs $60, and the flights of three wines begin at $35. Lately, offerings have included a chili-grilled blue-prawn salad with mango marmalade and Cuba libre spices, roasted pheasant with spinach gnocchi, and a trio of Sonoma bottlings. Jacket required; love of heights recommended. *1 World Trade Center (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Il Mattone—In a neighborhood populated by pricey destination restaurants, this affordable Italian place is a great, dependable alternative. Try the brick-oven pizza or house specialties like penne alla vodka, pollo Sorrentino, seafood scampi, and vitello saltimbocca. *413 Greenwich St. (343-0030). (I) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Opening
Bird Land

With the opening of Alouette—named for the fabled bird of the popular song—the Upper West Side is now happily less bereft of budget French fare. Chef Daniel Angerer, whose résumé counts heavyweights David Bouley and Jean-Georges Vongerichten as former bosses, keeps prices miraculously low for spring garlic soup with foie gras ravioli, confit de canard, seafood pot-au-feu, and aged Roquefort with herb salad and chestnut honey. (2588 Broadway, near 98th Street; 222-6808.)

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Pierino—An Italian dining room full of businesspeople and city politicians for lunch and dinner for the bankers on their way uptown offering meta-traditional dishes like lobster and steak. Yes, that was Peter Vallone. *107 Reade St. (513-0610). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

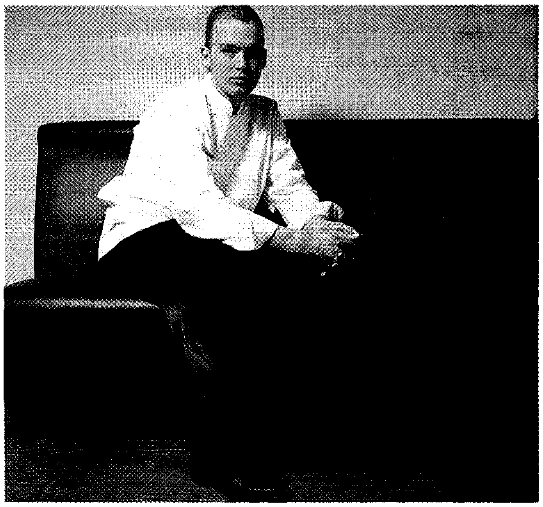
Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a $17.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Wall Street Club—Until April, this third-floor annex of Wall Street Kitchen & Bar serves only lunch. If you have anything to celebrate, do: Ten vintages of Dom Pérignon are available by the glass. The modern American menu features comte ravioli, oyster pan roast, and bacon-wrapped brook trout with spaetzle. *70 Broad St. (797-9500). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef Michael Lomonaco, formerly of the '21' Club, has landed at this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His new menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including skillet-roasted bluepoint oysters with sweet shallot-caviar cream; open raviolo of forest mushrooms, pumpkin, and sage; and Maine lobster with truffles, root vegetables, and buttermilk biscuits. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's superlative wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*



Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the Sixth Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale decor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *in-*

Photograph by Robert Wright.

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tentionally shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

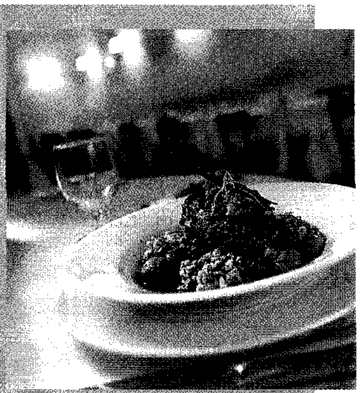
Bar Cichetti—Modeled after a typical bar in Venice, where patrons gather for a glass of wine—choose here among 50—and small snacks called *cichetti* (think Italian tapas). Sample among appetizer-size portions of rice balls, fried meatballs, frittatas, and crostini, or, should these snacks merely whet the appetite, have a full meal of pasta, chicken, fish or beef. Perfect for pre– or post–Film Forum noshing. *220 W. Houston St. (229-0314). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Data

Using Their Noodles



Even in this Zone-diet epoch, carbs rule. There's no end to the clamor for mashed potatoes, polenta, macaroni and cheese—the gloppy garnishes that put the comfort in comfort food. So it makes sense that when exotic foods make inroads onto American menus, it's generally via the dough route. (Gnocchi, pierogi, and sesame noodles come to mind.) "Chefs are always looking for interesting new starches," says Paul Gobert, chef-owner of Park Slope's Max & Moritz, whose menu is studded with Austrian specialties like spaetzle, the boiled and buttered baby dumplings that may be the most popular Mitteleuropan export since the Audi. Always available in Yorkville haunts like Heidelberg, the German pasta has lately become a standby on many upscale French and American menus, prized for its flavor-absorbing flexibility and ease of preparation. "It couldn't be simpler," says Quilty's chef Katy Sparks, who serves her black-pepper variety with braised rabbit (above). "It's eggs and flour and seasoning, pushed through a perforated pan into boiling water. When they rise to the top, they're done." **ROBIN RAISFELD**

DOUGH MAKERS	SPAETZLE SPECIAL
ACROSS THE STREET 444 East 91st Street; 722-4000	As specials: roast loin of pork with spaetzle and lady apples, or sautéed sea bass with Savoy cabbage and spaetzle finished with Riesling-butter sauce.
LESPINASSE 2 East 55th Street; 339-6719	Chili-crusted Millbrook venison with crispy spiced spaetzle.
MAX & MORITZ 426A Seventh Avenue, Park Slope; 718-499-5557	Austrian goulash with spaetzle.
MONKEY BAR 60 East 54th Street; 838-2600	Venison with Brussels sprouts, bacon, fromage-blanc spaetzle, and white-peppercorn sauce.
OPALINE 85 Avenue A, near 5th Street; 475-5050	Pork chop grilled with rosemary spaetzle, roasted apples, and brandy.
QUILTY'S 177 Prince Street; 254-1260	Braised rabbit with black-pepper spaetzle with caramelized pearl onions and sage.
WATER'S EDGE East River at 44th Drive, Long Island City; (718) 482-0033	Roast breast of guinea hen with sautéed foie gras, braised red cabbage, parsley spaetzle, and lingonberry sauce.

Photograph by Boyd Hagen.

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place. Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

53 Grove Street Cafe—This American bistro on a charming Village side street has the requisite exposed brick walls and outdoor patio (in warm weather). There's a raw bar from which one—actually, two—could order the plateau fruits de mer, which comes with vodka or champagne. Or try the sesame-crusted tuna with lemongrass marinade, the filet mignon in bourbon sauce, or the salmon en papillote with oranges. *53 Grove St. (924-8299). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Zoo—The newest West Village scene, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassolette. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

One if by Land, Two if by Sea—Elegant Village restaurant situated within an eighteenth-century carriage house previously owned by Aaron Burr. Four fireplaces and nightly piano music enhance a fine menu of American specialties like beef Wellington. *17 Barrow St. (228-0822). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

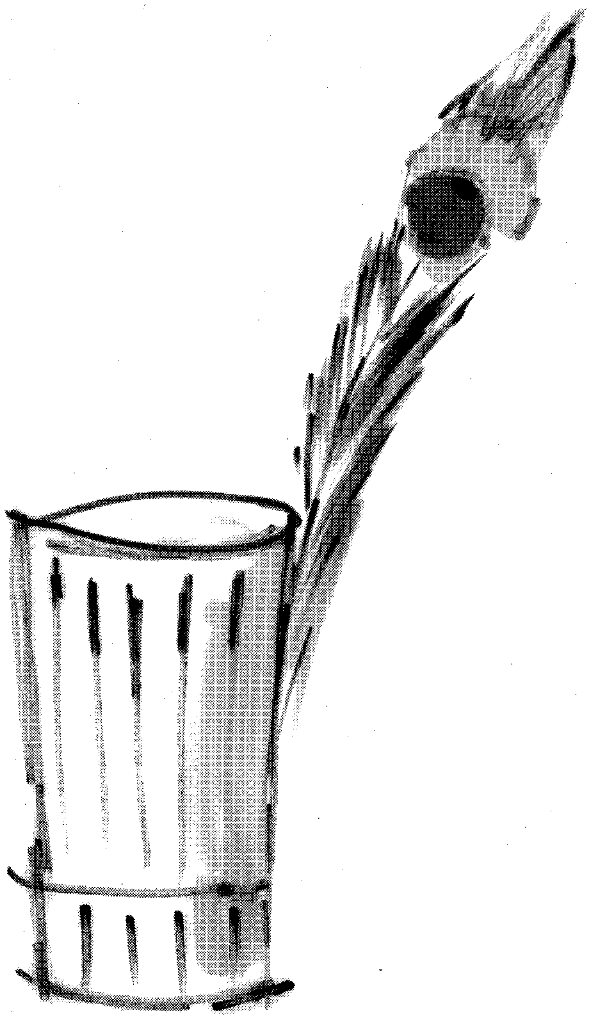
Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot invented by Charles Palmer and designer Fernando Saralegui, but the food is all very twentieth-century: crispy shrimp cocktail, cod-and-salmon cakes, veal stew, an exciting cheese course. *36 E. 22nd St. (228-4399). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Back Porch—Ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bambou—There's a new flavor on East 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like ackee-and-callaloo tart with scotch-bonnet-and-tomato salsa, and coconut-curry lobster with banana-lentil salad. The relaxing, tropical dining room and bar have already attracted such boldfaced names and beautiful faces as Harry Belafonte, Marisa Tomei, Iman, and Roshumba. *243 E. 14th St. (358-0012). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We *love* the white-peach sangría. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE,*



Just in case you missed *The New York Times* review of Peacock Alley and our exciting new chef Laurent Gras, here's a quick summary:

★ ★ ★

"The three best meals I have had this year have all been at the same restaurant. Peacock Alley." *-Ruth Reichl*

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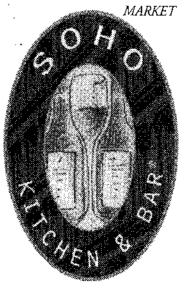

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Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American newcomer doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful new Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Patria—Zesty Latin American fare brought to you in a festive high-energy atmosphere. The three-story dining room suits the changing mood of diners: bright and airy by day and warm and earthy by night. Chef Doug Rodriguez comes from Miami via a childhood in New York. Really. Try the Mojito, Patria's signature drink made from sugarcane. *250 Park Ave. So., nr. 20th St. (777-6211). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Piccolino—A country-style Italian restaurant offering homemade pastas and thin-crust pizzas in a peach stucco duplex. (The building is a century old.) Worth trying are the risotto pescatore, shrimp-pesto pizza, and veal quattroformaggio. *8 E. 36th St. (683-6444). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Turkish Kitchen—This crimson-walled den has long been a beacon for adventurous eaters, who come for house specialties including kebabs, seafood and a variety of Turkish appetizers. *386 Third Ave., nr. 27th St. (679-1810). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Caffe Bondí Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimparata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Simply Pasta—Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and tirami su. *120 W. 41st St. (391-0805). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cocktail Terrace at the Waldorf-Astoria—A convenient roost for a business breakfast or afternoon tea. At night, to accompany your cocktail, there's live piano music and the occasional fashion show. *301 Park Ave., at 50th St. (872-4818). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Dinners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Domingo—The opera star's very own Spanish kitchen right in midtown Manhattan. Downstairs there's a Castilian-style tapas bar; upstairs, a more formal dining room with dramatic skylights. Drop in for churros y chocolate, or make a full meal of the regional Spanish specialties such as paella Valenciana. *209 E. 49th St. (826-8269). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Upscale Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

La Mediterranée—A cozy midtown bistro famous for its simple, well-priced peasant food. Try house specials like cold poached salmon, chilled stuffed baby lobster, and baby lamb chops. *947 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (755-4155). (M) AE, DC.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—

think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The $44 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Monkey Bar—David Rockwell's glamorous renovation of this landmark bar retains the original murals and sconces, and the menu offers extremely contemporary renditions of American fare, like tuna tartare with mango and avocado, and baked lobster with smoked bacon, corn chowder, and pommes Anna. *60 E. 54th St. (838-2600). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

ASK GAEL

Is there an old love I ought to rediscover?

I suggested to a former beau we go somewhere we used to love. "Felidia," he said. What joy to find a place that last seemed stodgy now born-again—kicky and bold yet as pampering (and expensive) as ever. Tradition is honored with pretty twists. Sauces are lighter, pastas still wonderful. We marvel at the warm and silken octopus salad with potatoes, red onion, and sprouts. Sprouts? Yes, Lidia Bastianich and executive chef Fortunato Nicotra are hip to sprouts. Game season means haunting gnocchi in wild-boar sauce and ravioli pillows stuffed with wild mushrooms. Touches of apple and orange peel make the classic gremolata garnish of melting osso buco seem brand-new. And don't miss couturier cannoli topped with a pastry bow or deeply dark chocolate-mousse cake with amareno cherries. (243 East 58th Street; 758-1479.)

The Park Restaurant—The plush surroundings in this new hotel-lobby restaurant are much fussier, but no more elegant, than the French-American fare concocted by ex-Lespinasse chef Fabrizzio Salerni. Sample dishes include porcini risotto, yellowfin-tuna tartare in wheat crust, steak-frites, and pan-roasted halibut in crispy rice paper. Piano music performed nightly, and cigar smokers have their own private lounge in which to indulge. *109 E. 56th St. (750-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under new chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has become reinvigorated. Known for his long association with French national hero Alain Ducasse, Gras has a special touch with foie gras and handles available American ingredients with a classical Gallic touch. Jackets required; harpist performs nightly. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—After nearly a quarter of a century, this elegant Japanese restaurant is still an oasis in the frenzy of midtown. Owner Fumiko Hosoda offers a traditional menu of tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, plus an array of chef's specialties. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, cherubs, jazz onstage, and New American cuisine. Executive chef Neal Myers, formerly of Ben Benson's, transports his expertise with meats and creatively prepared seafood, like pepper-crusted tuna with winter squash and black vinegar sauce, and crab cakes accompanied by cole slaw rolls. Try something from the extensive raw-bar menu. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is entirely devoted to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

C2 at the China Club—The restaurant at the newly relocated China Club is conspicuously upscale for its Eighth Avenue address and surprisingly calm for its affiliation with the dance club upstairs. Chef Eban Ross has created an eclectic menu of Asian-influenced dishes like tuna-and-salmon tartare with daikon-hijiki slaw and braised lamb shank with maple-roasted acorn squash. *268 W. 47th St.*

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Restaurant Charlotte—Offers a refuge from the hubbub and hustle of Times Square. Consistent American cuisine, from grilled sirloin and mashed potatoes to mushroom-dusted cod, in a postmodern setting. *145 W. 44th St., in the Millennium Broadway (789-7508). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V*

La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V*

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V*

Molyvos—This interpretive Greek restaurant a stone's throw from Carnegie Hall is a large, stylishly rustic showcase for chef Jim Botsacos's serious Mediterranean menu. Sit at one of the tables up front for drinks and meze, or indulge larger appetites with dishes like grilled octopus, rabbit stifado, and vegetable dolmades. *871 Seventh Ave., nr. 55th St. (582-7500). (M) AE, DC, MC, V*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V*

Pierre au Tunnel—Traditional French cuisine, served in thoroughly charming and comfortable surroundings. *250 W. 47th St. (575-1220). (M) AE, MC, V*

Pig and Whistle—This is midtown's notion of an Irish bar. A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. *165 W. 47th St. (302-0112). (M) AE, MC, V*

René Pujol—This theater-district oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes such specials as pan-seared duck breast with fruit chutney, steamed cod with coriander and ginger vinaigrette, and a salad of warm lobster, mesclun, and julienned vegetables. *321 W. 51st St. (246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V*

SeaGrill—Plush, cozy dining room opens to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, lobster salad with couscous in spicy lobster oil, and pepper-seared tuna steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V*

Tennessee Mountain Restaurant & Saloon—The midtown offshoot of a SoHo rib joint, this much larger duplex restaurant serves an extensive southern barbecue menu. Tchotchkes can be had at the "general store" souvenir stand, and cigar smokers have their own room in which to exhale. The barbecued and hickory-smoked ribs have already made a major impression on Manhattan meat-lovers. *121 W. 45th St. (869-4545). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V*

Torre di Pisa—David Rockwell designed this midtown Italian import as a surreal version of the Leaning Tower. Pane fritto con prosciutto di Parma and fagotto al funghi porcini are examples of the chef's updated Tuscan standards. A separate cigar/smoking room is available for private parties. *19 W. 44th St. (398-4400). (E) AE, MC, V*

Victor's Cafe 52—A venerable neighborhood haunt with tropical flair. Try the Cuban sandwich or the roast suckling pork. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V*

57th–60th Streets

Café Botanica—This American restaurant in the Essex House hotel is an airy, plant-filled respite from the congestion of Central Park South. Sunday brunch is a neighborhood fixture; at night, sample the chef's renditions of poached tuna Niçoise and rack of lamb. *160 Central Park So. (484-5120). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V*

On View
The Sweets Hereafter

The famous cartoon characters of ancient Gaul—Asterix the warrior and his inseparable friend Obelix—make their New York debut in human-size chocolate, in Payard Pâtisserie & Bistro's amazing traditional French Easter window. Other holiday specialties are smaller versions of the cartoon characters, as well as bunnies, ducks, and eggs in various sizes, all filled with handmade white, milk, and dark chocolates. Prices start at $30. (1032 Lexington Avenue, near 73rd Street; 717-5252.) GILLIAN DUFFY

California Pizza Kitchen—With its 27 varieties of wood-fired pizzas from the open kitchen, CPK has finally arrived in New York City. Of course, those varieties include Thai-chicken and BLT pizzas. There is also a kid's menu. All menu items are under $10. *201 E. 60th St. (755-7773). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V*

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, updated restaurant that's added a roster of sophisticated meat and seafood dishes to its renowned pastas. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V*

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen. Dinner only. *160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V*

Petrossian—This caviar emporium sells elegant meals—and fancy mementos—in an Art Deco setting with carved frosted glass, mink-trimmed banquettes, and period bronzes of lean flappers with leaner wolfhounds. New chef P.G. Gustafsson's menu offers the expected luxuries like roe, smoked fish, and foie gras, plus more elaborate meals like sautéed loin of Arctic venison and Dijon ginger-glazed rack of lamb. *182 W. 58th St. (245-2214). (E) AE, DC, MC, V*

Pondicherry—Although the entrance is situated directly next to the Paris Theatre, this new restaurant is somewhat sequestered down a flight of stairs. But the serene, comfortable environs are anything but cramped. Filmmaker Ismail Merchant is credited with contributing several recipes to chef Jean-Luc Kieffer's French-Indian menu. Some representative dishes include bouillabaisse, chicken biryani, Mauritius-style lamb, and grouper in banana leaf "papillote." *8 W. 58th St. (750-7474). (M) AE, MC, V*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V*

Two Rooms—You'd never expect it, but this landmark townhouse in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge is home to an extremely eclectic establishment, with colonial African décor in the skylit upstairs restaurant and a fireplace in the low-key downstairs lounge. Some of the dishes on chef Tom Harris's contemporary American menu include seared duck foie gras, lobster risotto, and crispy salmon in rice paper. *313 E. 58th St. (223-1886). (E) AE, DC, MC, V*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Allora—This cozy restaurant appeals to neighborhood regulars looking for gently priced Italian standards like osso buco and linguine pescatore. For the fish lover, crab cakes and Dover sole would make an ideal order. *1321 First Ave., at 71st St. (570-0384). (I) AE.*

Andrusha—Just because you live uptown doesn't mean you need to succumb to the relentless Chinese-and-pasta delivery routine. This understated restaurant serves a variety of Eastern European

Photograph by Amy Freeth.

dishes, from the familiar (beef Stroganoff, blini with caviar or smoked fish) to the less so (Czech roast duck, coulibiac of vegetables). *1370 Lexington Ave., nr. 90th St. (369-9374). (M) DC, MC, V.*

The Boathouse—This is a glorious oasis in Central Park where you'll find an extensive American menu, featuring such enticing dishes as the "lobster Martini," house-smoked, pan-roasted swordfish, and grilled veal chop with truffled mashed potatoes. For postprandial excitement, rent a bicycle, a rowboat, or a gondola. Live jazz Monday through Thursday. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Club Macanudo—This plush, elegant shrine to cigar-smoking also offers, besides an astonishing selection of smokes, a sophisticated variety of edibles. The American menu, listing such offbeat items as warm lobster enchiladas and pork loin with coffee-barbecue sauce, takes inspiration from Latin and Caribbean cuisines. Jackets required. *26 E. 63rd St. (752-8200). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Giovanni 25—This elegant regional Italian restaurant has a loyal neighborhood following that partakes of a menu heavy on game and dishes luxurified with seasonal truffles. Try the Dover sole and the black risotto with cuttlefish. *25 E. 83rd St. (988-7300). (M–E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

JoJo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. Lunch upstairs, overlooking the street, is especially lovely. *160 E. 64th St. (223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Mark's—Decked out like an English library, with plump, tasseled pillows to nest against. Fine East-West cooking and first-rate desserts. *25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (879-1864). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa City—Bobby Flay's uptown bastion of innovative southwestern fare offers dishes like ribs with molasses-barbecue sauce and sweet-potato tamale with spinach. The bar attracts regulars with the house margarita, spiked with cactus-pear juice, and its selection of twenty brands of tequila. *1059 Third Ave., nr. 62nd St. (207-1919). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Photograph by Steven Freeman.

Restaurant Plateauing

When Mesa City opened last year, Upper East Siders were thrilled to have a cheaper version of downtown's beloved Mesa Grill. Now that the buzz has subsided and the locals are forsaking the menu's cut-rate grub for more deluxe specials, owner Bobby Flay has dispensed with the discount and all the quesadillas but one. Transplanted Mesa Grill signatures, plus elaborate new entrées like Yucatan-style chicken with tortillas in a cast-iron skillet and tortilla-crusted grouper in a carrot-mango broth, now run upward of $20, making this offshoot more a well-to-do sister than a poor cousin. (1059 Third Avenue, near 62nd Street; 207-1919.)

Above 60th Street, West Side

Gabriela's—Real Mexican food. Don't come here for bulging burritos, but for fragrant chicken soup, steamed tamales that taste like corn, and tender pork marinated in Seville orange juice and spices. Try the *licuados*, fruit shakes, and the *aguas frescas*, fresh-fruit drinks, to cool off. *685 Amsterdam Ave., at 93rd St. (961-0574). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

La Caridad—Chino-Latino soul food in a neighborhood notoriously devoid of restaurant personality. Mammoth portions, enormous lines. *2199 Broadway, at 78th St. (874-2780). (I) ($).*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as

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it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The $42.50 dinner prix fixe, available Sunday through Thursday, is a great deal. *222 W. 79th St. (799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouth-watering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (996-0660). (I) ($).*

Tavern on the Green—A must for your country cousin. This mazelike collection of dining rooms, each with a view of the park better than the previous one's, is worth cutting the hansom-cab ride short for. *Central Park at 67th St. (873-3200). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

West 63rd Street Steakhouse—Mahogany tables and red suede walls make this nice-ified steakhouse less stultifying than its midtown brethren. Twenty-foot ceilings allow for a spectacular view of Lincoln Center, and there are seafood and pasta for those who enjoy the company of a meat-eater. *44 W. 63rd St. (246-6363). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24-01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Pearson's Texas Barbecue—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much farther than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. *5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). (I) ($).*

in concert

Daniele Gatti Directs the Philharmonic

Classical Music

Tuesday, March 17

Bo Skovhus, Baritone—Performs lieder by Schumann with Warren Jones, piano. *Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1100 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (570-3949), at 8; $30.*

Seymour Lipkin, Piano—Performs Beethoven. *Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, 695 Park Ave., at 68th St. (772-4448); $10–$20.*

Wednesday, March 18

Sequitur—Performs music with Judaic themes. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $10–$15.*

Ancient Music at St. Bartholomew's—Joan Lippincott, organist, performs Bach, Liszt, and Howells. *St. Bartholomew's, 109 E. 50th St. (378-0248), at 7:30; $10–$20.*

Guarneri String Quartet—Performs Arriga, Mozart, and Debussy. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 8; $10–$15.*

Diane Leslie, Piano—Performs works by Schubert, Brahms, and Albeniz. *New York Public Library, Jefferson Market, 425 Sixth Ave. (243-4334), at 6:30; free.*

New York Philharmonic—Performs Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* and Mahler's Symphony No.5; Daniele Gatti, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 8; $20–$75.*

Thursday, March 19

New York Festival of Song—Performs musical settings of popular nineteenth-century folk songs, with Susanne Mentzer, mezzo-soprano, and Zheung Zhou, baritone. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 8; $25.*

New York Philharmusica—Performs Mozart; Robert Johnson, director. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $20.*

Bargemusic—Quartet performances of Bach, Mozart, and Kurtág. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $20–$30.*

New York Philharmonic—See 3/18.

Friday, March 20

Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra—Performs Sibelius, with Joshua Bell, violin, and the New York Gay Men's Chorus; Robert Spano, conductor. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette St. (718-636-4106), at 8; $15–$35.*

Emmanuel Pahud, Flute—Performs Beethoven, Schubert, Poulenc, and Prokofiev, with Eric Le Sage, piano. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $18.*

Los Angeles Philharmonic—Performs works by Magnus Lindberg, Leonard Bernstein, and Schumann. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 8; $25–$45.*

New York Philharmonic—See 3/18, at 2.

Saturday, March 21

"Wall to Wall Bach"—A twelve-hour music marathon featuring classical, jazz, and dance interpretations of works by the composer. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-1414, ext. 403), 11 to 11; free.*

Seoul Symphony Orchestra—Performs works by Mozart and Bizet. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $25.*

Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra—See 3/20.

New York Philharmonic—See 3/18.

Sunday, March 22

Los Angeles Philharmonic—Performs Mahler's Symphony No. 3 with Swedish contralto Anna Larsson and the New York City Opera's Children's Chorus; Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (875-5000), at 3; $25–$45.*

Lucy Moses School Marathon—Works by Israeli composers of the past century. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 11; free.*

Previews
Bachanalia

Twenty years ago, when the Symphony cinema at Broadway and 95th Street became Symphony Space, Upper West Siders feared a nearly movieless nabe. But with its diverse concerts and lectures—and occasional film festival—the new performance hall quickly won the locals' hearts. On March 21, as part of its twentieth anniversary, Symphony Space will reprise its 1978 debut event, "Wall to Wall Bach"—an all-day marathon of the composer's music. Classical renditions of Bach's work will be interspersed with avant-garde, jazz, and dance interpretations, while flutist Eugenia Zukerman and pianists Claude Frank and Lilian Kallir—who performed at the original event—will play alongside neighborhood amateurs. (See listings for details.)

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Canticum Novum Singers and Baroque Orchestra—Perform Bach. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $20.*

Ensemble Wien-Berlin—Performs Beethoven, Hindemith, Ligeti, and Enescu. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 5; $25–$35.*

Matthias Goerne, Baritone—Performs Schubert and Wolf with Andreas Haefliger, piano. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 2; $32.*

Bargemusic—See 3/19, at 4.

Monday, March 23

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra—Performs Debussy, Sibelius, and Ravel; Jesus Lopez-Cobos, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $17–$65.*

Glimpses of Glimmerglass—A preview of Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All*, a production from the Connecticut opera's new season. *Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $10.*

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Performs Wagner's *Lohengrin*, 3/17 at 7 and 3/21 at 12:30; Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, 3/18 at 7:30 and 3/21 at 8; Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, 3/19 at 8; Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*, 3/20 at 8. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $24–$200.*

New York City Opera—Performs Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, 3/17 at 7:30; Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffman*, 3/19 at 7:30, 3/21 at 8, and 3/22 at 1:30; and Puccini's *La Bohème*, 3/20 at 8 and 3/21 at 1:30. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $20–$85.*

Amato Opera—Performs Verdi's *Rigoletto*, 3/22 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (228-8200); $20.*

Dance

Balleto Di Toscana—Performs *Mediterranea*, 3/17–3/22. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $26.*

92nd St. Y Harkness Dance Project—Choreography by Ido Tadmor, 3/21 and 3/22 at 8, and 3/22 at 3. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $15.*

New York Theater Ballet—Performs *Legends and Visionaries*, 3/20 at 8, and 3/21 at 3 and 8. *Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, 695 Park Ave., at 68th St. (772-4448); $15–$20.*

Illustration by Natalie Ascencios.

nightlife

Richard Davies...Wynton Marsalis

Concerts

The Allman Brothers Band—Like the Energizer Bunny, these hirsute Southerners just don't stop (also like the aforementioned hare, they're covered in plenty of fuzz). Nearing the end of their monthlong run, they just get trippier and trippier. 3/17–3/18, 3/20–3/22 at 8 P.M. *The Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (496-7070). $35–$50.*

Joan Baez—The seventies' conscience does her pals in the Band a good turn by subbing for them after their last-minute cancellation. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800). $25–$45.*

New York Pops—Karen Mason—best known as Nora Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard*—joins Pops leader Skitch Henderson for "The Broadway Songbook," a playful romp through, well, the Broadway songbook. 3/20 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800). $17–$65.*

G. Love & Special Sauce—The Philadelphia *faux*-bluesman loves a good time, a good pair of bowling shoes, and a good lap-steel guitar. By the look and sound of him, he also loves a good frat party. 3/20 at 8 P.M. *Roseland, 235 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $17.50.*

"Greatest Hits of Cole Porter"—KT Sullivan, Terry Burrell, and Jeff Harner headline the Lyrics & Lyricists series's tribute to the master of hilarious innuendo. Highlights include "You're the Top," "Anything Goes," and "I Get a Kick Out of You." 3/21 at 8 P.M., 3/22 at 2:30 and 8 P.M., 3/23 at 2 and 8 P.M. *92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100). $35–$38.*

"Michael Kamen's Opus"—Bryan Adams and Bryan Ferry are the unlikely guest stars in this benefit shindig. With the Juilliard Youth Orchestra. 3/24 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 881 7th Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800). $15–$65.*

"Makoché Tour Native American Festival"—3/22 at 7 P.M. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway at 95th St. (545-7536). $22.*

"The Marsalis File"—As jazz's No. 1 historian, Lincoln Center fixture Wynton Marsalis often forgets to get his due as a composer in his own right. Major works like *Blood on the Fields*—his oratorio from last year—get the full retrospective treatment in this two-night stand. Plus, the trumpeter debuts his latest, "Big Train." 3/19 and 3/21 at 8 P.M. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500). $37.50.*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Matchbox 20—3/20 at 8 P.M. *Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (307-7171). Sold out.*

Megadeth—Speed metal—now and forever. 3/21 at 8 P.M. *Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (307-7171). $12.50.*

Vanessa Rubin—The singer leads her own quartet through her elegant paces, after opening sets by trumpeter Ingrid Jensen and vibraphonist Cecilia Smith. 3/20 at 8 P.M. *Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard (718-463-7700). $20.*

"Seventies Jazz Pioneers"—Randy Brecker, Buster Williams, Al Foster, and Pat Martino are among the hugely diverse group of all-stars in this big show. 3/20 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $15–$25.*

Clubland

Arlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hippish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 3/18: Modern English (yes, *that* Modern English). 3/20: Footstone. 3/21: The Novellas. 3/23: Jake. 3/24: Joy Askew; Willie Nile. 3/25: Raging Slab. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 3/17: Leahy. 3/18: The Jerry Garcia Band. 3/25: Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Brownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. 3/19: Big Iron Skillet. 3/20: Bigmouth. 3/24: Closer. 3/27: Richard Davies (see box, page 127); Archer Prewitt; the Bells. *169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

CBGB & OMFUG—Ground zero of punk's Stateside explosion and, twenty years later, still a smoking, flyer-strewn pit—in a good way. Dig the new, unscuzzy basement lounge. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 3/20–3/21: Gitar Shorty. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

The Cooler—The meatpacking district's subterranean, steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.'s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. 3/18: Mutiny, with Siraiki, Singe, and Bhom Shankar—whose vocalist, harmonium player, and tabla-player will open the night with a classical-Indian set. 3/20: Groove Collective. 3/21: Ben Neill; We; LaBradford. 3/23: Tower Recordings; I Sound; Tarwater; Dimaxion; To Rococo Rot. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. Wednesday's comedy revue "Stella" continues to deliver some of the finest young stand-up talent in the city. The Sun Ra Arkestra swings on in joyful idiosyncrasy Sunday nights through February and March. 3/17: Brenda Bergman. 3/20: Raving Noah; Prime 8; Piñataland. 3/21: Greg Garing. 3/24: Joe Hurley; Leif Arntzen's Prairie News. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Talent

Rocket Men

You could be forgiven for mistaking San Diego's Rocket From the Crypt for a marching band. Their numerous members wear matching uniforms; they have a horn section; they lacquer their hair with pomade. You won't, however, confuse their churning, muscular big-band punk with Thanksgiving-morning martial music. At Irving Plaza, March 18, they deliver the oomph—without the oompah.

Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. It's a bit of a crush near the stage, but there's an amiable bar, 119, right around the corner for a preshow aperitif. "Savoy Sundays" are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 3/16–3/17: The Saw Doctors. 3/18: Rocket From the Crypt; Boss Hog. 3/19: Shawn Colvin. 3/20: Bela Fleck. 3/24: Joe Satriani. 3/25: Propellerheads. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, two stages, two microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the biggest names in now music. 3/18: Susan Deyhim and Richard Horowitz. 3/19–3/21: Anthony Braxton. 3/23: Joseph Bowie's Funkshop. 3/24: Spanish Fly, with Steven Bernstein. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055).*

Life—Okay, we give. It *is* the only hip place on Bleecker Street, even if the doormen can get a lit-

Photograph courtesy of Interscope Records.

tle tough on those they deem unworthy. What bouncers aren't? Wednesday night's "Get a Life" gets you in touch with your inner rock-and-roll rump-shaker. *158 Bleecker St. (420-1999).*

Louisiana Community Bar and Grill—Weird neighborhood in which to label anything "community," but the joint books some surprisingly good blues, jazz, and country acts. Every Saturday in March, the Harlem Jazz Legends swing on in octogenarian glory. 3/20: Lonnie Youngblood. 3/21: Ray Shinnery. 3/23: Nick Palumbo's Flipped Fedoras. *622 Broadway, bet. Houston and Bleecker (460-9633).*

Manny's Car Wash—A little Chicago on the Upper East Side. Mondays, beware salivating yuppie swells here for ladies' night. Every Sunday, it's Manny's World Famous Blues Jam. 3/19–3/20: Coco Montoya. *1558 Third Ave., bet. 87th and 88th Sts. (369-BLUES).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more au courant time slots of MTV. 3/18: Sean Lennon. 3/19: Love American Style. 3/20: The Figgs; the Gravel Pit; Flu 13. 3/21: Richard Davies (see box, this page); Versus. 3/26: David Poe; China Forbes. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

Rodeo Bar—A surprisingly untacky honky-tonk in Kips Bay—with gas-station signs, mounted longhorns, and peanuts in the shells. Its urban rockabillies tend to be pierced and dyed, and its stage occasionally hosts greats like Austin legend Ronnie Dawson, Joe Ely, and Otis Blackwell, all past visitors. 3/17: The Dan Zanes Band. 3/20: A tribute to Gene Vincent. 3/21: Jumpin' Jupiter. 3/24: Dan Zanes Band. *375 Third Ave. at 27th St. (683-6500).*

The Roxy—The cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertaining and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Wednesday-night rollerskating jam keeps boogie queens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. The rental skates may have been in service since the eighties; the D.J.'s occasional Beatles-dance-mix medley may grate; but when you get right down to it, nothing beats shaking a groove thing while whizzing around a dance floor at neck-breaking velocity. *515 W. 18th St. (627-0404). $.*

S.O.B.'s—The city's premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 3/10: Tony Rebel. 3/17: The Meditations. 3/18: Ralph Irrizary with Timbalaya. 3/20: Zin. 3/23: Johnny Pacheco. 3/24: Junior Jazz with Worl-A-Girl. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Every Friday and Saturday, the Tony Corbiscello Big Band gets the room swinging, lindy-hopping, and otherwise engaging in social behaviors of yesteryear (look for guest appearances by John Pizzarelli and other bona fide big names), after which the next generation takes over, to ever-more-vigorous dancing. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 3/17: Bela Fleck & the Flecktones. 3/21: Urban Blight; Belizbeha. 3/22: Victoria Williams; Chris Stills. 3/23: Marcy Playground; Jolene. 3/24: Solas; James Keane & Keane's Fancy; Jerry O'Sullivan. 3/25: Space Monkeys; Ivy; D.J. Chillfreez. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. Sunday is "Fastbreak," a jungle-techno-hip-hop-"Kung-fu breakbeat" extravaganza. 3/18: Thirtieth-anniversary revival of *Hair. 161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Windows on the World—Named for a French brand of motor-scooter, Dutch singer Solex is a one-woman electro-dance-party freakathon. Unlike other female proponents of "electronica" (like, say, Björk), Solex not only sings on her excellently scuffed-up inventions, she produces them, too. Something else she and Ms. Gudmundsdottir don't have in common: The Dutchwoman slips her own *nom de rock* into every single song title on her new album, *Solex Vs. the Hitmeister*—as in "Solex All Lickety Split." She plays one of her only American shows, ever, 3/24. Plus, it's free. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000).*

Photograph by Charles Peterson.

Talent

The Saugerties Lineman

In "Main Street Electrical Parade," songwriter Richard Davies sings wistfully about a Disneyland float that's being packed up and shipped off to Florida. "That song," says the Australian—who's spent the past five years moving from London to Boston to upstate New York—"reflects a big part of my experience as a migrant." While the track may be about the unnerving transience of life in America, its twangy fingerpicking and lilting slide guitar suggest a certain degree of comfort in Davies's current—very American—locale, a rustic home halfway between Woodstock and Saugerties. The area's musical legacy—the Band's earthy, late-sixties roots-rock—looms large on *Telegraph,* Davies's contemplative new album. His previous records were puzzling and beautiful but far from easygoing. As half of the duo Cardinal, for instance, he helped create a lushly orchestrated, sixties-inspired sound that can only be described as baroque pop. Even 1996's minimalist solo effort, *There's Never Been a Crowd Like This,* was far more mannered than the laid-back new disc. Davies's experimental phase looks to be behind him. "I've done a lot of thinking about music in the past," he says. "Now I've done enough thinking. I've moved on to playing the music I want to play on a gut level." As a result, he says, *Telegraph* may be his most awkward album to discuss. "Music is difficult to be articulate about," he tells me. "I worked on the record until I liked it; you just told me you love it. So there isn't much more to say, is there?"

Davies plays at Other Music (15 East 4th Street) on March 24—the day* Telegraph *is released; at the Mercury Lounge on March 21; and at Brownies on March 27. (See "Clubland" listings.) **Ethan Smith**

Jazz

Birdland—More comfortable than the Blue Note, swankier than the Vanguard, and proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Every Monday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Every Friday the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. 3/17: The Duke Ellington Orchestra, under the direction of Paul Ellington. 3/18: Jill Seifers and Michael Kanan. 3/19–3/21: John Faddis Quintet, with Javon Jackson. 3/22: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra. 3/23: Duelling organs, with Joey DeFrancesco and Charles Earland. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. 3/17–3/22: Monty Alexander's Yard Movement; Mark Whitfield Quartet. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Dharma—An elegant little gem of a club, serving funky jazz on the historic shopping thoroughfare—just don't pay retail. 3/19: Duende. 3/20–3/21: Cecil Payne. 3/23: Eric Alexander Quartet. 3/24: Groove Collective. *174 Orchard St., bet. Houston and Stanton. (780-0313).*

Iridium—Merlot, the artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center, hosts some formidable jazz comers in its cozy basement, along with the occasional legend. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours 3/17–3/22: Frank Foster Quintet, with Randy Brecker. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

"Jazz at Noon"—East midtown's long-running, Friday-afternoon jam session—where Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, and Elvin Jones have all been visiting scholars—returns for its thirty-third season, with the usual high-caliber house band. Noon–2:30 P.M. 3/20: Jay Leonhart. $5 cover. *San Martin Restaurant, 143 E. 49th St. (832-0888).*

The Jazz Standard—Midtown south's newest, biggest, and happeningest hangout for hard-boppers and the men and women who love them. You can't hear the bands from the swanky first-floor restaurant, but the basement club's modified menu should more than suffice. 3/17–3/19: The Ingrid Jensen Quartet. 3/20–3/22: Virginia Mayhew Quintet. Sets Sun., Tues.–Thurs. at 8 P.M. and 10 P.M., Fri. and Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and midnight; $10–$15 cover on weekdays, $15–$20 cover on Fri. and Sat. *116 E. 27th St. (576-2232).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. 3/18–3/21: Larry Rivers. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Red Blazer—Reopened in a new spot, the famed Theater District jazzerie continues to offer up fine sounds. Monday: Rick Hardeman and his New Orleans Jazz All Stars. Tuesday: Kelly Freizin Jazz Band. Wednesday: Sunny Daniels Swing All Stars. Thursday: Stan Rubin and His Swing Sextet. Friday: Sam Ulando and the Bourbon Street Jazz Band. Saturday: Bob Cantwell and the Stompers. *32 W. 37th St. (262-3112).*

Roulette—A TriBeCa performance space featuring experimental and adventurous music—basically, a miniature Knitting Factory. 3/25: Hot off a wildly successful run at CBGB's swanky basement lounge, Kitty Brazelton leads a small group through off-kilter chamber music originals like "The Two-Timing Fuck I'm In Love With." Shows at 9 P.M. *228 W. Broadway (219-8242). $8.*

Showman's Cafe—Harlem's subtly wonderful jazz club, where you can always get a table and the jukebox is one of the best in the city. Every Thursday, sixties organ great Reuben Wilson leads his heady trio. Sets at 10 P.M., midnight, and 2 A.M. No cover; two-drink minimum. *2321 Eighth Ave., bet. 124th and 125th Sts. (864-8941). $.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Every Sunday, the Jazz Composers Forum, followed by the Across Seventh Street Septet. Every Monday, Jason Lindner's youthful, Ellington-meets-Mingus big band. Tuesdays, cerebral and atmospheric guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel leads his quartet. Shows start at 10 P.M. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 3/17–3/22: Michele Rosewoman Quintessence. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Tavern on the Green—A somewhat overwrought restaurant in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern's Chestnut Room is still a top-flight jazz club—with excellent sound and a full roster of stars. 3/17–3/22: Saxophonist and bass-clarinetist Leonard Hochman leads a trio through tunes culled from his recent *Manhattan Morning* CD. *Central Park at W. 67th St. (873-3200).*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M. 3/17–3/29: Pianist and hard-bop stalwart Tommy Flanagan is the finest trio-leader working. His dates are shining examples of broad-ranging repertoire combined with uncanny feel and fearsome chops. This two-week stay merits multiple visits. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Performance

Maximum Marsalis

This season, Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra have dedicated programs to the music of past masters (Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk), subgenres (cool jazz, big-band swing), even nations (Cuba). Now, with "The Marsalis File," the band examines the historically astute oeuvre *of its own founder and conductor, and premieres his newest composition, "Big Train." (Alice Tully Hall, March 19 and 21.)*

Zinno—A pretty Italian restaurant with a tiny piano on its awning, Zinno is more dining spot than jazz club, though its musical guests are often pleasant surprises. Shows Mon.–Sat. at 8 P.M. *126 W. 13th St. (924-5182).*

Comedy

Carolines Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays and Tuesdays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 3/19–3/22: Pauly Shore. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50–$18.50, two-drink minimum.*

Catch a Rising Star—The high-class variety show-place has broadened its focus from straight stand-up to a mix of sketch and alternative comedy, theater, and musical performances. Friday's "The Big Bad Music Show" explores that riskiest of all entertainment territory, humor-rock. Shows Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Wed. and Thurs. at 9 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11 P.M. *253 W. 28th St., (244-3005).*

Chicago City Limits—The long-running and much-ballyhooed troupe, performing their latest, "@ChicagoCityLimits.comedy." Wed.–Thurs. at 8:30 P.M., Fri.–Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 P.M. $20 cover. *Chicago City Limits Theatre, 1105 First Ave., at 61st St. (888-LAFF).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 8:30 P.M., 10:15 P.M., and 12 A.M.; and Sun–Thurs. at 9 P.M. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Fri. at 9 and 11:15 P.M.; Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45 P.M. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat.; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. 3/16–3/22: Matt Burke; Jerry Diner; Richie Byrne. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. at 9 and 11P.M. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 P.M. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. 3/20–3/21: Tony Woods; Todd Barry; Frank Vignola. *34 W. 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Cover is $7–$12. Shows: Sun.–Thurs. at 7; Fri.–Sat. at 7, 9, and 11:30 P.M. 3/20–3/21: Jason and Randy Sklar; Paul Michael Mercurio; Al Lubell; Larry Amoros; Sue Costello. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Cabaret

Arci's Place—Dinner, dancing, and piano-playing crooners. Mon.–Tues. Larry Ham plays solo at 5:30 P.M. Wed. at 7 P.M. and Fri.–Sat. at 9 P.M., Mike Cerrati and his trio play. Thurs. is a cabaret crap-shoot: Take what you get. No cover. *450 Park Ave., at 30th St. (532-4370).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Bemelmans Bar—Through 5/2: Peter Mintun. $10 music charge; no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Carlyle—Dixie Carter, Tues.–Sat. Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band. Sets at 8:45 and 10:45 P.M. $50 ($25 for Davis's late, Woody-free set); no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Singer-pianist Kathleen Landis. $12 minimum; jacket and tie required. *Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (940-8195).*

Danny's Skylight Room—Thurs.–Sun., through March, Blossom Dearie's back in town. Every Monday and Tuesday, Ronny Whyte is in the the piano bar. $6–$15, plus $10 minimum. *346 W. 46th St. (265-8130).*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? Fridays through April: Jamie deRoy and friends. 3/18: Scott Coulter's "Remember the Magic." $10–$15 cover, two-drink minimum. *343 W. 46th St. (757-0788). $.*

Eighty-Eight's—A West Village venue whose unassuming façade conceals a top-notch little theater within. Sundays, Rohn Seykell continues his wildly popular run. 3/17 and 3/24: Steve Hayes and Tom Cayler. $15, with a two-drink minimum. *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery. 3/22: Phillip Officer. Through 4/4: Fascinating Aida. Tues.–Thurs., sets at 9 P.M. Fri. and Sat., sets at 9 and 11 P.M. $40 cover; two-drink minimum. *363 W. 46th St. (586-0244).*

Judys Restaurant and Cabaret—Every Saturday through April 25, Judy Kreston and David Lahm perform *My One and Only Love*—a romance-themed collection of standards and originals. Sets at 9 P.M. $15 cover; $10 minimum. *49 W. 44th St. (764-8930).*

The Park Bistro—Tenor Chris Barrett serves up chestnuts of the American songbook in this swanky midtown lounge. No cover; no minimum. *109 E. 56th St. (750-5656).*

Rainbow and Stars—Romance, prewar charm, and wood paneling, hundreds of feet above midtown. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 and 11 P.M.; seating for dinner is at 6:30 P.M. Through 3/28: "Rhythm on the Rainbow . . . The Hot Harmonies of the Boswell Sisters." *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

Sardi's—Thursdays through May, comic, singer, dancer, and pianist Mark Nadler performs numbers from his 3,000-song repertoire of standards, show tunes and other theater-district fare. Fridays, John Malino's combo plays jazz standards. $15 cover; $12 minimum. *234 W. 44th St. (221-8444).*

"Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know"—In the tradition of *Forbidden Broadway* comes Stan Freeman and Jay Leonhart's new broad slapstick-'n'-show-tunes revue. Zeroing in on tourism's wacky cross-cultural misunderstandings may not be quite the precision exercise the old West 72nd Street warhorse's fearless parodizing was. But does anybody go to dinner theater expecting subtlety? Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8 P.M.; Sat. at 7:30 and 10:30 P.M.; Sun. at 3 and 7:30 P.M. $40 cover. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

Bars

bOb—A house party in some out-of-town aunt's living room. A tribute to the city's night-crawling diversity—fashion divettes, funksters, losers, and hippie girls. Fat-lady mud wrestling on the televisions above the exit and the bar keeps the traffic at these vital transaction points light. *235 Eldridge St., at Houston St.*

Brooklyn Inn—The arty and underemployed bang elbows with Brooklyn Law School cutups in this raucous cattle car. The self-consciously cool jukebox is equal parts Tom Waits, the Pogues, and John Coltrane. Pints of Guinness and Schaeffer and everything in between. Ask the regulars about the bartenders: They all have strong opinions. *Bergen St. at Hoyt St., Brooklyn (no phone).*

Ciel Rouge—If you can get a table, you're in luck: The extensive and perfectly executed drink selection, the Second Empire décor (which includes a paint job that matches the moniker), and the French-café-style entertainment all make Ciel Rouge the perfect setting to pass a winter evening. If you get stuck standing at the bar, though, the half-Eurotrash, half-reverse-slumming-downtowner crowd might be a bringdown. *176 Seventh Ave., bet. 20th and 21st Sts. (929-5542).*

Photograph by Carol Friedman.

the mix

Persian Brides...Revisiting The Group

John Leonard's TV Notes

The McCourts of Limerick (3/17; 8 to 9 P.M.; Cinemax) adds Michael and Alphonsus to the already familiar Malachy and Frank, telling the camera of Frank's son Conor how awful it had been for them in Ireland with the alcoholic father who deserted them and the extraordinary mother who begged for handouts to feed them and the magic well in the forest and the priests who were such mean little country boys, plus a couple of scenes from their New York stage show, *A Couple of Blackguards.*

For Your Love (3/17; 8:30 to 9 P.M.; NBC), a new sitcom about the recently wed in suburbia, is at least matter-of-factly interracial, but every other trace of modern consciousness has been erased. It's the old ball-and-chain routine, seasoned with such jokes as Holly Robinson Peete's telling us, after a home-pregnancy test, "I think I know how to pee on a stick."

Lateline (3/17; 9:30 to 10 P.M.; NBC), another new sitcom with a lot more buzz, stars Al Franken as a self-deluding TV newscaster who wants, if not Ted Koppel's anchor job, at least Robert Foxworth's, which he won't get because he's a schlemiel, but meanwhile his "news nun" producer, Megyn Price, must decide whether it's worth it to quit the network for an on-camera cable job, even though she knows that "anybody with a nice smile and perky hooters can be a cable-TV news reporter," and Miguel Ferrer is reneging on a covenant he made with Franken, scribbled on a cocktail table, and network veep Robert Prosky is at the Knicks game, and Ralph Nader, Candace Gingrich, Michael Dukakis, and G. Gordon Liddy show up for cameos, while Julia Roberts doesn't at a First Amendment Dinner, and don't you wish TV news really was funny?

Intimate Portrait: Katharine Graham (3/18; 7 to 8 P.M.; Lifetime) more or less talks around the publisher of the Washington *Post.* Even with her friend Gloria Steinem in charge of the narration, we still hear more from boys like Ben Bradlee, Bob Woodward, Carl Bernstein, Osborn Elliott, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and a wholly unrepentant Henry Kissinger, telling us whatever we already know about the Pentagon Papers and Watergate.

The Advanced Guard (3/21; 9 to 11 P.M..; Sci-Fi) wastes Isabella Hoffman in a cannibalistic *Aliens Invasion* flick, though not until she discovers human emotions even as she's experimenting, in an orbital lab, on a noisy sample of us that resists the usual mind-control techniques. Fortunately, she can switch bodies when she has to, to keep those feelings coming.

Escape: Human Cargo (3/22; 8 to 10 P.M.; Showtime) stars Treat Williams in a true-life story of a Texas salesman of prefabricated housing who gets cheated in a Saudi Arabian deal by the usual corrupt ragheads, spends time in a foul prison, is befriended and helped to escape—in a shipping crate, after an exceedingly hot day on the tarmac at the airport—by American oil worker Stephen Lang, and ends up thinking that all those Muslims are worse than scorpions. I'd have thought we were somewhat beyond this xenophobic Arab-bashing, but Edward Said would seem to have written about "Orientalism" in vain.

Radio Highlights

New York & Company—Weekdays at 2 P.M. 3/17: Debra Monk and Sam Trammel on the revival of Eugene O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!;* Molly Ivins on *You Got to Dance With Them What Brung You;* Douglas Coupland on *Girlfriend in a Coma;* Maria Flook on *My Sister Life.* 3/18: Peter Fonda on his life, as told in *Don't Tell Dad;* Mary Gordon on *Spending;* Abbas Kiarostami on *Taste of Cherry.* 3/19: Angela Davis on *Blues Legacies & Black Feminism;* Barbara Goldsmith on *Other Powers.* 3/23: Grammy winner Michael Kamen; Dorothy Allison on *Cavedweller.* 3/24: David Halberstam on *The Children;* Edna O'Brien on *Down by the River;* Peter Selwyn on *Surviving the Fall.* Leonard Lopate is the host. WNYC AM; 820.

Casper Citron—Saturdays at 10 P.M. 3/21: Dr. Howard L. Kaufman, Asst. Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, discusses a new method of fighting cancer with vaccines; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Pulitzer Prize winner, discusses the effect of multiculturalism on a common national identity in his new book *The Disuniting of America;* Jerome Hines, Metropolitan Opera basso, on his career and his book, *The Four Voices of Man;* Wayne Wang on his new film *The Chinese Box.* WOR, 710 AM.

Happening Masked Man

The ambitiously fantastical creations on display in "Ralph Lee: Masks, Festival Figures, & Theatre Designs" come to life when Lee himself demonstrates their use, March 19 and 24. It's the last exhibition in the main gallery of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts before it closes for a two-year renovation.

Photograph by Jim Moore.

The Written Word

Joe Connelly—3/19 at 7 P.M.: The author reads from *Bringing Out the Dead.* Tower Books and Records, 383 Lafayette St. (228-5100); free.

Jen Banbury—3/20 at 7:30: Reading from *Like a Hole in the Head*, a novel. Barnes & Noble Astor Place, 4 Astor Place (420-1322); free.

Dorit Rabinyan—3/18 at 5:30: Reading from her debut novel *Persian Brides* at the Jewish Book Center, 45 E. 33rd St. (889-6800, ext. 284 or 285); free.

"The Metaphysical Streetcar Conductor"—3/24 at 7 P.M.: With poet Luciano Erba and translator Michael Palma, W. S. Di Pietro, and Ann Snodgrass. Poets House, 72 Spring St. (431-7920); $7.

"Rhythms of Romance"—3/20 at 8 P.M.: Premiere African-American romance novelists Doris Johnson and Loure Bussey read steamy passages while Shirley Black Brown does an interpretive dance. The Joyce Soho Theater, 155 Mercer St. (996-8413); $15.

"The Tenth Muse II: Readings by New Poets"—3/23 at 8:15 P.M.: Anne Caston, Lorna Dee Cervantes, and Cornelius Eady reading from their work. 92nd St.Y, Unterberg Poetry Center, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $10.

Don DeLillo, Charles Frazier, Jon Krakauer, Vivian Gornick, Anne Fadiman, Pauline Maier, James Tobin, Joseph Ellis, Sonia Sanchez, Charles Wright, and Frank Bidart—3/23 at 8: The National Book Critics Circle award finalists reading from their work. The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South (463-6778); free, but seating is limited.

Tom Carey and Eileen Myles—3/23 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from recent work. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (505-3360); free.

Gore Vidal—3/16 at 7:30 P.M.: The author of *United States* reads from his latest, *The Smithsonian Institution*. Barnes & Noble Union Square, 33 E. 17th St. (253-0810); free.

Angela Y. Davis—3/18 at 7:30 P.M.: The author reads from *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*. Barnes & Noble Union Square, 33 E. 17th St. (253-0810); free.

J. Robert Lennon—3/19 at 7:30 P.M.: The author of *The Light of Falling Stars* reads from his novel and receives the Discover Great New Writers Award. Barnes & Noble Union Square, 33 E. 17th St. (253-0810); free.

Lectures and Panels

"The Art and Science of Book Reviewing"—3/24 at 3 P.M.: A discussion with reviewers and review editors. NYU Law School, 40 Washington Square South, (463-6778); free.

"Baseball, Besuboru, Yakyu: Comparing the American and Japanese Forms"—3/18 at 6:30 P.M.: A discussion with Masaru Ikei, Sachio Kinugasa, Mariyon Robertson, and Keith Hernandez. Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155); $10.

"Asia's Currency Crisis: Global Implications"—3/10 at 8 A.M.: A breakfast panel discussion of how Asia's economic turmoil may affect other emerging markets. Council of the Americas, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. (628-3200); $60.

Ralph Lee: Masks, Festival Figures, and Theatre Designs—3/19 and 3/24 at 6:30: Puppet and mask maker Lee discusses his work and demonstrates the use of some of his creations. Main gallery (second floor) of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza (870-1630); free.

"How to Make Crime Pay . . . Enough"—3/18 at 6 P.M.: A Mystery Writing Panel with Lawrence Block. The New York Public Library, 127 E. 58th St. (221-7676) free.

William J. vanden Heuvel—3/17 at 7:30 P.M.: The ambassador will speak on "Franklin D. Roosevelt, Stephen Wise and the Holocaust." Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, 30 W. 68th St. (877-4050); free.

Cancer Prevention and Wellness—3/19 at 6 P.M.: Medical experts will offer lifestyle recommendations for healthy living. Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Rockefeller Research Laboratories, 430 E. 67th St. (639-3074); free.

An Evening With David Henry Hwang—3/17 at 6:30 P.M.: The author of *M. Butterfly* talks about his new play, *Golden Child*. Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA); $15.

"Watermark: Vietnamese American Poetry and Prose"—3/18 at 6:30 P.M.: Monique T.D. Truong moderates a panel on the development of a new generation of writers. With readings from a new anthology of work by Mong Lan, Truong Tran, and others. Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-ASIA); $7.

"Making Headlines"—3/24 at 7: A panel discussion with Thomas Maier, Mary Anne Giordano, Karen Scott, Sydney Schanberg. The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South (777-1610); $10.

"Circa 1989"—3/23 at 6:15 P.M.: A lecture from the series *"Quijotismo:* The Conquest of a Modern Spanish Cultural Empire," with Christopher Britt. NYU's King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center, 53 Washington Square South (998-3650); free.

"Ballet & Modern Dance: Scenes From a Marriage"—3/24 at 8 P.M.: Kevin McKenzie of the American Ballet Theatre speaks with *Village Voice* dance critic Deborah Jowitt. 92nd St.Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $18.

"The Story of Early Chinese Art Retold"—3/18 at 7 P.M.: A lecture with Wu Hung, Harrie A. Vanderstappen Professor of Chinese Art at the University of Chicago. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3587); $15.

Robert De Niro at the Actors Studio—3/30 at 7:30 P.M.: An in-depth interview about the actor's life and career. The New School, Tishman Auditorium, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5859); $245 for seven sessions with various actors.

Tours

"The Female Spirit"—3/21 at 1 P.M.: A look at Manhattan's most famous female artists, writers, and activists, and their homes and haunts. Call 718-721-5254 for reservations and meeting place; $12.

Greenwich Village—3/21 at 1 P.M.: Explore the area and its history. Meet at the Washington Square Arch (439-1090); $9.

Immigrant New York—3/22 at 1 P.M.: A multi-ethnic walking tour through the Jewish East Side, Chinatown, Little Italy, and what was once Little Germany. Meet at the front steps of City Hall (439-1090); $9.

East Village—3/20 at 7 P.M.: A tour of one of New York's most outlandish neighborhoods. Meet at the cube in Astor Place (370-4214); $10.

"Starlight, Starbright"—3/21 at 7 P.M.: Join the Rangers for a night of star-gazing in Brooklyn's Prospect Park. Meet at the Litchfield Villa; enter the park from 5th St. and Prospect Park West, (800-201-PARK); free.

Metropolitan Opera—Weekdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.: A unique, behind-the-scenes view of the creation of the opera. Includes costume and set design, the performers' rehearsal facilities and dressing rooms, and the opulent auditorium. At Lincoln Center; call 769-7020 for reservations and times; $8.

Exhibitions

"Return Address: Revisiting Exposures"—3/18–4/23: An exhibition of photographs by Israeli artist Margalit Mannor. 92nd St.Y, Weill Art Gallery, 1395 Lexington Ave. (996-1100); free.

Paul Strand: A Photographer in His Garden—Through 4/4: A collection of photographs, many of which have never been published, created by the artist during the final years of his life in Ogreval, France. Aperture's Burden Gallery, 20 E. 23rd St. (505-5555, ext. 325); free.

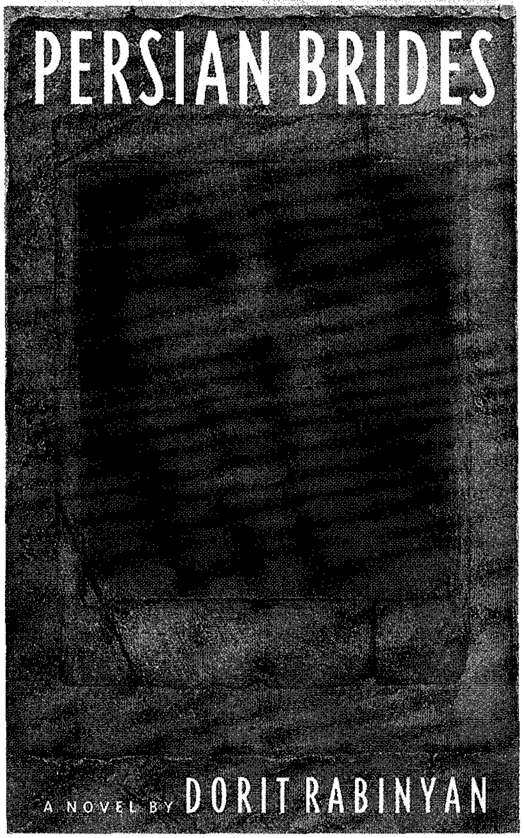
Happening

The McCarthy Era

"The Group is the—or was the—Vassar rooming system, and a rather cruel one," Elizabeth Bishop explained to a friend when the first chapters of Mary McCarthy's most celebrated novel appeared in *Partisan Review*. Bishop, who was a year behind McCarthy at Vassar, added: "I have an awful feeling I'll appear in the book . . . It's fantastic writing—good, but without one shred of imagination, something that seems almost impossible—but Mary does it." *The Group*, which chronicled the lives of eight women from the class of '33, received tremendous publicity and tepid reviews when it appeared in 1963. The publicity was generated by McCarthy's provocative treatment of sex (she gave us the *woman's* side of the story) and birth control (her riffs on the diaphragm could be reprinted in *Our Bodies, Ourselves*). The reviews reflected the general consensus that McCarthy simply couldn't carry off a novel. It was, as Bishop had noted, a problem of imaginative sympathy: McCarthy had none. But stretches of *The Group* are immensely vivid—only her victims could fault McCarthy's astringent wit, or her total recall for how people behaved, and with whom. Which is why Manhattan Theatre Club's "Writers in Performance" reading of excerpts from the novel (March 23 at City Center) is possibly the best way to honor McCarthy. The eight actresses who will impersonate the group can deploy the author's sparky asides without the burden of sustaining the entire work. Neither the novelist she wanted to be nor the sociologist she was sometimes labeled, the uniquely stylish Miss McCarthy just might prove, nearly a decade after her death, next week's star of the spoken word. LINDA HALL

Photograph from Corbis-Bettmann.

Happening **No matter how great their artistry or original their talents, first-time novelists tend to serve up disguised autobiography. Dorit Rabinyan, age 25, is a winning exception. Her *Persian Brides,* just out from George Braziller, re-creates daily life in an early-twentieth-century Jewish village. Rabinyan's first appearance in the U.S. is a March 18 reading at the Jewish Book Center. (See listings.)**



Bridging New York—Through 6/28: Selections from the museum's painting, print, and photographic collections dealing with the city's bridges. The Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5 suggested contribution.

"Proudly We Served"—Through 9/5: Photographs, artifacts, and models commemorating 200 years of service by African-American veterans. Intrepid Sea Air Space Museum, Pier 86, W. 46th St. (957-7055); $10.

50 Years of "The Subway Sun"—Through 3/22: An exhibit of the poster series "The Subway Sun," which regularly inspired and admonished passengers on everything from their patriotic duty to proper underground etiquette. New York Transit Museum, Boerum Pl. and Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn Heights (718-243-8601); $3.

Assignment: Rescue—Through 3/29: "The Story of Varian Fry and the Emergency Rescue Committee" commemorates Varian Fry, an American relief worker responsible for rescuing nearly 2,000 Jews and opponents of the Nazis, including Marc Chagall, André Breton, and Hannah Arendt, from Vichy France during World War II. Though Fry's efforts are not as well known as those of Raoul Wallenberg and Oskar Schindler, his accomplishments are no less riveting. The exhibit is composed largely of historic photographs, artifacts, and related works of art. The Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); $7.

New York From Above: An Aerial View—Through 6/14: An exhibit of 26 paintings by contemporary painter and geographer Spelman Evans Downer that chart the evolution of Greater Gotham over the past 100 years. His work depicts historical landscapes before extensive urbanization and also includes space-age satellite views of Manhattan. The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); $5 suggested contribution.

Events

New Museum of Contemporary Art—3/21: From noon till midnight, the Museum will offer readings, artists' performances, and world music to celebrate its renovation. 583 Broadway, between Houston and Prince Sts. (799-5515); free.

Online

New York Magazine on the Web—Click from "Stephanie's Surf Report" (in the "Today" section of www.newyorkmag.com) to a new Website pick every day. This week: Recognize Women's History Month at the National Women's Hall of Fame; celebrate the Year of the Tiger with the Asia Society; enter a community "pod" and you just might find your fellow pea; stuff yourself on matzoh-ball soup with your bubbe; and visit a site that will help you take care of those summer plans for the kids. And since you're already in the neighborhood at www.nymag.com, stick around and check out all our web exclusives, including daily picks of New York events in "Vanessa Takes Manhattan," Ondine Cohane's new neighborhood guide, "50 Ways to Love Brooklyn Heights and Vicinity," and the newest books in "First Words." Plus, we've got selected articles from the current issue, a searchable "Cue" section, archives of your favorite critics and columnists, and more.

GAME WEEK

HOME ▨ AWAY ▨

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
RANGERS	OTT MSG 7:30PM		MON MSG 7:30PM			DET FOX 3PM	PHI ESPN 8PM
ISLANDERS			OTT FSNY2 7:30PM		CAL FSNY3 9PM		EDM FSNY 8PM
DEVILS			ANA FSNY 7:30PM		WAS FSNY 7PM	WAS FSNY 7:30PM	
KNICKS		PHI MSG 7:30PM		POR MSG 7:30PM	ATL MSG 7:30PM		UTA NBC 12:30PM
NETS	CHI FSNY 8:30PM			ORL FSNY 7:30PM	IND FSNY 7PM		WAS FSNY 3:30PM
	3/16	3/17	3/18	3/19	3/20	3/21	3/22

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Solutions to last week's puzzles

■	W	■	P	■	T	■	C	■	C	■	A	■	G	■
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kids

Storm Brewing...Pulling Strings

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● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

Children's Events

Storm Warning—Nexus (see photo) brings 150 instruments from all over the world that make different kinds of bird calls. In this **CARNEGIE HALL** family concert, the Canadian percussion ensemble explores music that is played for occasions common to all cultures—like calming the baby, dancing, and heading into battle. Expect to make sounds that, multiplied by several hundred audience members, swell to form an enveloping acoustic storm. 3/21 at 2. Storytelling by Charlotte Blake Alson prior to the performance begins at 1; tickets to three different preconcert demonstrations by Nexus members (at 1, 1:15, and 1:30) will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis beginning when doors open, at 12:30. Seventh Ave. and 57th St. (247-7800); $5.●

Ringlets, Dimples, Tunes—Shirley Temple stars as Little Miss Broadway, and Susannah McCorkle and her band reinterpret the songs Ms. Temple made famous, in *Curly Top on Broadway* in the "Reel to Real," a series that pairs complementary cinematic and live family entertainment. 3/21 at 11 and 1:30. **WALTER READE CINEMA,** 165 W. 65th St. (875-5370); $8.50, $5 kids under 16.●

Greatest Show on Earth—With this 128th edition of **RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY,** the circus returns to some of its outlandish P.T. Barnum roots: Arrive an hour before the performance and come into the ring to meet with "the world's tallest man"—eight feet tall—and Michu, a 33-inch "Tom Thumb." In the show itself, witness a "fire-breathing Vesuvius," the "Lady in the Cube," and a man they are calling "The Iron Jaw." Nassau Coliseum, 3/17–3/23; Madison Square Garden, 3/27–3/13. Call 307-7171 for information; $10.50–$42.50.

A Musical Toy Store —**THE LITTLE ORCHESTRA SOCIETY** introduces kids in the 3-to-5-year-old age bracket to sections of the orchestra with the help of costumed characters Bang the lion, Bow the panda, Buzz the bee, and Toot the bird. 3/21 at 10:30 and noon and 3/22 at 12:30 and 2. The Florence Gould Hall (of the French Institute), 55 E. 59th St. (704-2100); $32. ●

Childhood Classics—New York tots can pick and choose between classic stories put on by puppet actors: Prokofiev's orchestral *Peter and the Wolf* and *The Frog Prince* set to the music of Kabalevsky's *Comedians.* Greenwich Village Center Theater, 219 Sullivan St. (call **PUPPETWORKS'** Brooklyn theater for reservations at 718-965-3391). Sundays through 4/5 at 1 and 3. Tickets are $7, $5 for children. Susan Delery Whedon's **PAPAGENO PUPPET THEATER** stages *Cinderella* (weekends at noon) to the Prokofiev score, and *Puff the Magic Dragon* (weekends at 1:30) to the song made famous by Peter, Paul, and Mary. 462 Columbus Ave., bet. 82nd and 83rd Sts. (874 3297), through 4/5; $5. Reservations required. At **MISS MAJESTY'S LOLLIPOP PLAYHOUSE,** *Rapunzel* and *The Adventures of Robin Hood,* both plays written by Marilyn Majeski, are presented on weekends at 1:30 and 3:30 respectively. Through 4/26. The Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St. (741-6436); $8.

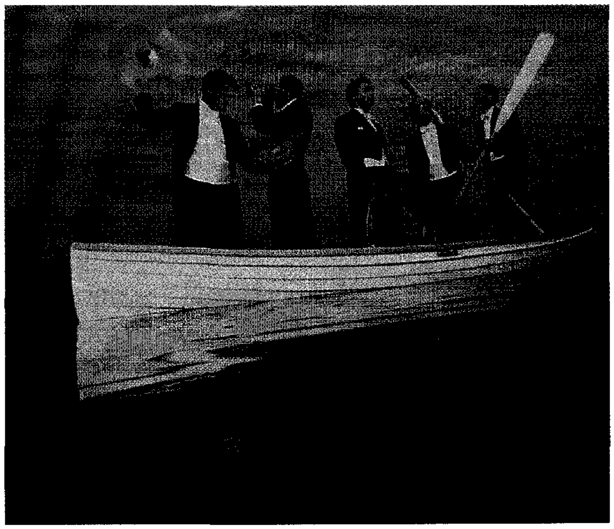
Theater of the Absurd—**WE MUST BE IDIOTS'** production of *The King Stag* is a comic-romantic fairy tale with an edgy modern sensibility and wit incorporating puppets and live music. Through 3/21. Access Theater Space, 380 Broadway, fourth floor (946-2142). Tickets are $12, $10 students and seniors.●

The Beloved Dearly—Doug Cooney's darkly comic musical about a youthful tycoon who goes into the pet-funeral business. Recommended for ages 6 and up. Through 3/29. **TADA!** 120 W. 28th St. (627-1732). Tickets are $12, $6 for children.

Performance

Slap Happy

While the Canadian percussion group Nexus travels with hundreds of bangable, scrapeable instruments, it won't use a single one of them in *Storm*—a composition played entirely with "body sounds." The Carnegie Hall family concert takes place March 21 at 2. Tickets are $5. See listings.



Ready, Get Set—Time to start practicing for the **1998 NIKE RUN FOR THE PARKS** Pee Wee races. Every child who participates receives an official race badge and a T-shirt. Organized by the New York Road Runners Club, the races—25 yards to a mile in length—take place 4/4 beginning at 9 A.M. at the West Park Drive, 67th St. in Central Park (across from Tavern on the Green). Call 860-4455 for additional information. Entry fee is $6.

Class Clown—He's something of a legend on the children's party circuit. Catch "Silly Billy" at **CAROLINES KIDS KLUB** to find out why. 3/22 at 2. (Lunch is available—with comic flourishes—upstairs at Comedy Nation Restaurant.) 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). Tickets are $10; reservations required.●

High Five—Cultural events of every stripe become wonderfully affordable to junior- and senior-high-school students through the end of May. Under the auspices of High 5, nearly 6,000 tickets to events at New York's leading cultural institutions cost $5 weekends; $5 buys *two* tickets on weeknights. Pick up High 5 catalogues free at Ticketmaster outlets, public libraries, select Barnes and Noble bookstores, or the High 5 executive offices (1 E. 53rd St.); access it at www.high5tix.com or call HI5-TKTS to have one sent. Participating cultural institutions include Carnegie Hall, the Apollo Theater, and the Museum of Modern Art. (Students—from schools anywhere—need to present valid identification.)●

Chinese Outlook—Making art themselves helps kids to appreciate what they see. Children in the 5-to-10-year-old age range can look at the *China: 5,000 Years* exhibit in the museum's downward-spiraling galleries at the uptown **SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM.** Afterward, they'll get the opportunity to roll up their sleeves and make images inspired by what they have seen. 3/22 at 2. Downtown, in a tots program for the 3-to-5-year-old set, children look at art, also from China, displayed in the galleries of the **GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO.** After that, they are invited to join in storytelling, art-making, and games that explore ideas raised by the works of art. 575 Broadway, at Prince St. 3/20, 4/24, and 5/15 at 11 A.M. Enrollment for both programs is limited; to register, call 423-3587; $10 includes admission and materials.

Sleight of Hand—*Joseph Gabriel Magic '98,* a magic show by an astonishing performer in the intimate **LAMB'S THEATRE,** is the kind of show that "works" for a multigenerational outing. In addition to weeknight performances, matinees are on both Saturday (at 2) and Sunday (at 3). 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200); $25–$45.

What Is Cool?—Tickets will go fast for a Wynton Marsalis–hosted "Jazz for Young People Concert" that considers cool schools of modern jazz. 3/28 at 11 and 1. **ALICE TULLY HALL,** 140 W. 65th St. (721-6500); $12 for adults, $8 for kids.

Humankind—One of **THEATREWORKS'** most popular productions, *The Color of Justice* relates the story of Thurgood Marshall, who took the doctrine of "separate but equal" all the way to the Supreme Court. 3/21 and 3/22 at 12:30. The Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (627-7373). Individual tickets are $18.50; a flexible ten-ticket subscription is $145.●

Radio City—"New York Kids," an irreverent radio show for 8- to 12-year-olds, features kids' own reviews, bad jokes, and guests. This week (3/22), the Brothers Grinn, a Westchester-based improvisational theater group, makes up songs and stories based on input from callers. Sundays from 6 to 8 on **WNYC AM** 830.●

Labor of Love—*The Story of Iqbal,* presented by the Puppeteers' Cooperative—with all manner of puppets—is the true story of a Pakistani boy's battle against child labor. Sold to a carpet manufacturer at the age of 4, Iqbal escaped and came to the United States to crusade against child labor before being assassinated in his native country. Suitable for ages 9 to adult. 3/20 at 7 and 3/21 at 2. **HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT,** Abrons Arts Center Experimental Theater, 466 Grand St., at Pitt (598-0400). Tickets $6, $4 children.●

cue

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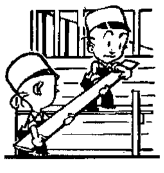

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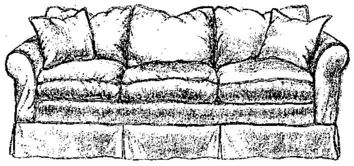

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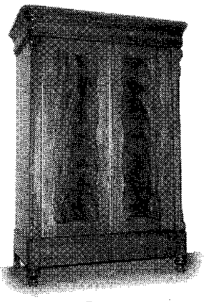

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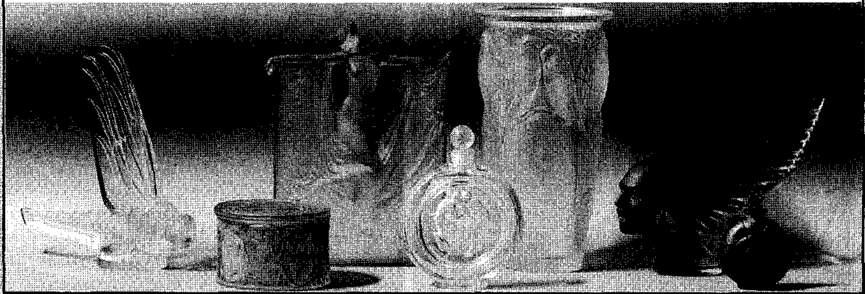

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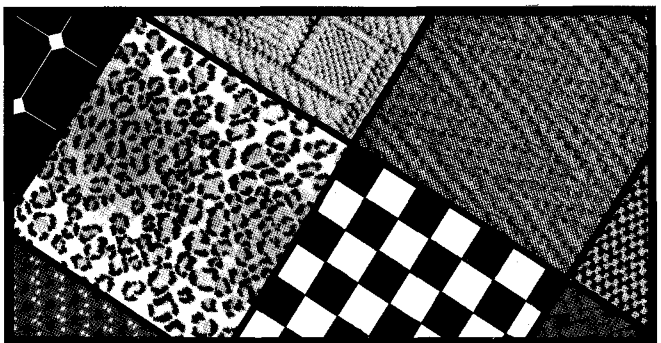

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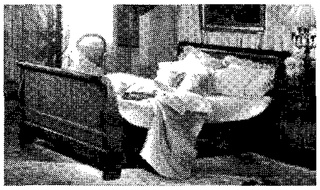

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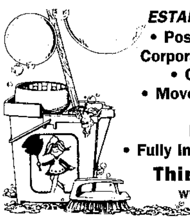

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Strictly Personals

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Passion For Life, Laughter—A dynamic, handsome CEO with much warmth and humor - a multifaceted, caring, incurable romantic, 5'10", slim, 43, fun, seeks ditto: a bright, affectionate lady under 38, for hope, love. Phone/photo a must. 2385 ✉☎

Jet-Set Male—Desires long-term relationship. Are you an intelligent and beautiful woman used to being treated with respect and generosity, or desirous of such? If so, a fairy-tale life of travel and luxury may be available. Please send all of the following: note, photo, age, height, weight and phone to: 2329 ✉

Healthy, Somewhat Wealthy—And sincere, single white male who is attractive (some even think good-looking), successful NYC business owner, 6'3", 205 lbs, 53, nonsmoker, athletic, divorced, emotionally open, playful, adventurous, mischievous and huggable, who appreciates the finer things in life. Seeking someone special to share real quality time in a giving/receiving long-term relationship. Please be at least 5'2", with a fabulous figure, slim/pretty, great legs, somewhat buxom, 32-42, under size 8, open, warm, caring, passionate, communicative, sensitive, unencumbered, and still believes in fairy tales (love). Photo and phone a must or no reply. 2390 ✉

Not Just A Pretty Face—This woman loves the Ritz in Paris or a tent on Saranac Lake. I pump iron, study art history, travel and cook. My nest's almost empty, and, sadly, I find a good dog is easier to understand than the average man. I'd like to settle down with a solvent, funny, generous man, 45-60, who has good friends, knows how to be connected and intimate, is comfortable with cultural and athletic pursuits. Am I speaking your language? 2348 ✉

CEO, Sensitive, GQ Type—45, 6', green-eyed, fit and athletic world traveler (without baggage), witty, upbeat, with other laudable virtues and vices... Stubbornly holding out for a smart, sassy, slim and stunning soul mate, 25-37, 5'3" plus, for romance, commitment and family. Dark-haired/light-eyed and/or foreign-born especially welcome. Photo a must - will exchange. 2316 ✉

Good Girls Are Hard To Find—Beautiful, sweet, sexy blond, 29, wholesome and pure on the inside - but you would never know it from the outside. You are extremely successful, intelligent, kind, Jewish, 30-36, and want a forever romance with an old-fashioned yet knockout-looking girl. Note/photo/phone. 2308 ✉

Cheeseburger In Paradise—At 53, 5'9" and athletic build, I am clean-cut, conservative by nature, moderate of habits and financially successful. Not from NY, I have nevertheless achieved a fair amount of success and now want to spend more time with a new business in Caribbean, catering to affluent public, while still maintaining Manhattan-based primary endeavors including extensive business and social functions. Seeking a lady, 35-45, well-groomed and attractive, educated, enjoys outdoors - particularly water sports and boating, gentle nature, refined outlook and high value on compassion. Unencumbered and available for extensive travel if chemistry is right. Must be tolerant of smoking. Photo, please. 2389✉

I Want—A woman who would not normally respond to a personal ad. You are strong-willed, sensitive, sensual, romantic, with uncompromising values, grace, class and wit. You are 25-35, model-slim, take great pride in your appearance, and not afraid to admit you're a cut above. I am 41, 5'11", 170 lbs, green eyes, wavy hair and handsome. Interests include music (jazz), theater, downtown dining, cooking, Knicks, antiquing, travel and fashion. I am kind, caring, very successful, and pride myself on my integrity and keen sense of humor. Photo/note please. 2388✉

Seeking An Angel—Are you young (not past 31), pretty, trim, bright, possibly petite, can be spontaneous and adventurous, but is not flitted or immature? Please send a note with a photo. I am described as 50, single white male; intelligent, so creative, handsome (a cross between a taller Dustin Hoffman and Kris Kristofferson), natural, sophisticated, uncompromising, financially successful, sensitive to ideas and positive possibilities, compassionate, insightful, determined. I enjoy topics of physics, some science, asking and answering questions of why, appreciate art and music, like to relax and travel when not working. I'm looking for a spirited and lovely young woman for romantic love and friendship. 2306 ✉

Seeking Arts Lover—By bright, funny, successful, attractive man, tall, Jewish... Looking for attractive, fit woman, 30s-early 40s, well-educated, high-energy, who loves NY culture...for fun/serious relationship. Photo, please. 2303 ✉

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Slim Brunette—With a creative Downtown edge, a career in the arts, athletic, 5'6", very pretty, upbeat, warm with a great sense of humor, seeks a physically fit, professional counterpart with a passion for life. No one under 40, please. Note/photo/phone. 2334✉☎

Attention Gentlemen, Ages 50-65—My friends tell me my standards are too high, but I know you exist. You are a kind, cultured, attractive, nonsmoking, successful and financially secure man with a sense of humor, a zest for life and a taste for all that NYC has to offer. If you fit this description, you will meet an extremely beautiful and intelligent, Jewish, successful professional woman, tall, blond, 50, who enjoys classical music, opera, theater, fine dining, the excitement of the city and the tranquility of the country, and is looking to share it with the right man. 2366 ✉☎

Spring Forward—Slender, attractive, sincere, 5'3", Jewish Manhattanite who loves the arts, good conversation, travel, French and tennis, seeks male counterpart, 45-53. Note/phone. 2318 ✉☎

Pretty Widow—Warm, gracious, cultured, secure, with generous heart, love of life and fine-tuned sense of humor, wishes to meet mature gentleman, 60s-70s, for companionship and romance. Optional note, phone. 2372 ✉☎

Class Act—Tall, great legs, slim, beautiful blond, sensuous, 38, Jewish - loves travel, tennis, sports. Seeks tall, successful, athletic and fit male, ready for a passionate relationship. Photo/note, please. 2339 ✉☎

Free To Be You And Me...—Elegant, long hair, blond head-turner, substance/style, slender, petite, great legs, passionate, nurturing, worldly. Desires loving relationship with attractive, extremely successful, stylish, clean-shaven man, 55-70, good sense of humor, who enjoys travel and finer things in life. 2354 ✉

Are All The Good Guys Taken?—I am 5'2", incredibly cute, a Jewish professional with exercised mind as well as body. Seek extremely handsome, 34-40 male, professional, 5'8" plus, fit, fun and athletic. Golf and tennis a plus. Photo a must. 2391 ✉

Eclectic, Evolving, Self-Aware Woman—Attractive and outgoing, professional female, 37, 5'7", independent, intelligent, spiritual, down-to-earth and interested in health. Loves art, museums, movies, dining out, antiques, photography, exploring, exercise, walking, biking, traveling, music, NYC. Seeks open-minded, caring, educated, financially, mentally and emotionally secure professional male, nonsmoker, who enjoys cooking and similar interests. Interested in best friend, etc. Send picture and note. 2332 ✉☎

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Beautiful, Slim And Bright—Successful, warm, caring female. Enjoys arts, travel, sports. Seeks financially secure male counterpart, 45-55. Note/photo. 2357 ☒

A Sparkling, Vibrant, Lovely—Jewish widow seeks gem, 59 plus. 2380 ☒ ☎

You: Asian-American Woman—28-33, meet European man, 38, 6', handsome, honest, sensitive, educated, witty, curious, rational, romantic - seeking that special person to embark on a lifelong journey. Note/photo. 2343 ☒

Not Afraid Of Commitment—Well-rounded, very attractive, athletic, Ivy-educated, honest professional, 34, 5'10", 175, seeks a pretty, fit, intelligent female who is playful and enjoys fine dining, travel, sports and theater. Photo and phone. 2335 ☒

Successful, Handsome, Athletic—Humorous, 5'8", 35, NJ Jewish professional with traditional values - seeks slim, caring, attractive, honest Jewish female for a lifetime of love, happiness and adventure. Photo. 2325 ☒

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Handsome Man—57, 5'6", enjoys cycling, hiking...well-traveled, well-educated, spiritually-oriented. Seeks woman to share similar interests, preferably in the 40s or 30s. Please send photo. 2361 ☒ ☎

Entrepreneur, Mensch—It took 50 years to reawaken the soul within me. Starting over is heaven and hell. Looking for that special LI woman, 40-50, who understands the entrepreneurial spirit, creativity and constraints - and wants to enjoy life. Let's talk. Photo/phone, please. 2350 ☒ ☎

NYC Bachelor—56, tall, slim, wealthy, easygoing, divorced, white, Christian. NYC apartment and CT ocean home. Seeks female, 36-46. Race, religion unimportant. Photo if you can. 2319 ☒

Record Company Founder—38, well-traveled, self-made, resembles Steven Seagal, looking for a nonsmoking woman of substance, 23-32, to share his penthouse. Photo and note appreciated. No singers please. 2392 ☒

Elegant—Very pretty, petite, active Jewish female, 60, seeks fun-loving, fit, successful male. 2376 ☒ ☎

Jewish Man With Tepee—Art director, handsome and fit, seeks tall, curvaceous woman, 35-42, with train and caboose on track, to spend many moons together. Photo, please. 2347 ☒ ☎

Omiai—Tycoon seeks mature Japanese woman! The king of vineyards on Long Island seeks an attractive Japanese woman interested in horse riding and wine, and who looks exquisite in kimono. 2379 ☒

Single Jewish Female—Striking, artistic, intelligent, 40s, relocating - seeks quality male. POB 620746, Newton, MA 02162

Cuddly, Caring, Cute Westchesterite—Petite, slim professional female seeks honest, accomplished man, 48-55. 2375 ☒

Late Bloomer—Well-educated (three Master's), well-situated, (212), marriage-minded Catholic gal - sweet, petite blond, 46, seeks man of integrity, 38-49. Single dad a plus. Ethnicity open. 2358 ☒

Jewish Female—31, vivacious, MBA, cat owner, cute and sexy, seeks male companion, 5'9" plus, 30-45, intelligent, physically fit. Arrogant men need not apply. Chemistry says it all! Note/photo. 2337 ☒ ☎

Refined, Attractive European Woman—Recently widowed CT resident with interests in art (Metropolitan Museum volunteer), concerts, travel, tennis and skiing, seeks to meet a gentleman with similar interests and qualities. This caring, sophisticated, financially secure woman (upper 50s) would like to meet the right gentleman, age 57-67. Photo/note, please. 2323 ☒

Handsome Jewish Physician—Newly available at 50, seeking exceptionally bright and attractive, nonsmoking, tri-state lady with picture. 2330 ☒

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A WRITTEN RESPONSE
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STRICTLY PERSONALS
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Wanted:—One subtle, erudite, accomplished, enormously attractive woman, 35-45. (There are women everywhere, but where are you?)... By: funny, vigorous, well-employed, unpredictable, monogamy-minded writer, early 50s. Photo, please. 2307 ☒ ☎

Recent CA Transplant—Seeks beautiful, athletic, intelligent woman, 35-48, a passionate skier who can ski the face of Bell in Aspen, who likes movies, music, museums and biking. Am an Ivy-educated professional, comfortable in a suit, at a dinner party, or in jeans in front of the fireplace. You won't be disappointed. Note/photo a must. 2309 ☒

Radiant On A Bike—Beautiful, accomplished, slender, elegant professional would welcome meeting a principled gentle "man" who is articulate, dynamic and well-traveled. Delighted that you are 44-53, educated, sophisticated, fit, generous, warm...have a sense of humor and the confidence to be with an extraordinary woman. I enjoy the arts, love to dance, study, work and laugh. Am vivacious, spontaneous, fascinating, and would be fascinated to learn from a man with similar traits. Bio/photo, please. 2355 ☒

Seriously Handsome—Seriously successful 40-year-old male, extremely fit, 5'8", 150 lbs - residences: NYC/East Hampton ocean. Seriously looking for that special woman, 25-32, model/actress looks. Note/photo a must. 2338 ☒

Distinguished Business Executive—Christian man, 50, very handsome and fit, divorced, 5'9 1/2", 165 lbs, dark hair, blue eyes. Passions include Lincoln Center, elegant dining, fine wines, cooking, martial arts, scuba diving and other fun things. Seeking woman, 30-42, of class, beauty, elegance and charm, to make a passion. Photo and note a must. 2387 ☒

Beautiful European Woman—In mid 40s, successful professional with a passion for life. Enjoys art, theater, travel, sport and adventure. Seeks a Jewish gentleman between 50 and 63, successful, attractive, fun-loving and enthusiastic. Please send letter and recent photo. 2346 ☒

The Best Is Yet To Come—Sexy, spirited and beautiful, 52-years-young divorcee seeks handsome, successful, kind and warmhearted man for committed relationship. No photo, no reply. 2384 ☒

Diane Keaton Seeks Sam Shepard—Warm, petite, cute, 40-year-old Jewish woman seeks diversified, successful Jewish man who enjoys movies, theater, weekends at the beach or in the country, exercising and more - for lifelong relationship. Note and photo appreciated. 2364 ✉

Black Female Attorney—33, gorgeous, with incredible body, legs and smile, seeks marriage-minded, successful, attractive, fit, tall single male under 45, to build a passionate, trusting and exciting future. Note and recent photo. 2336 ✉

Attractive, Intelligent—And kind, 32, 5'9", 127 lbs, divorced mom of 6-year-old, trilingual. Loves books, horses, traveling and cooking. Seeks educated, attractive and caring man who enjoys life the way I do. Photo. 2304 ✉ ☎

I'm Special - Are You?—Very attractive widow, mid 60s, intelligent, personable, cultured, warm and considerate, would love to meet cultured gentleman with similar qualities. 2333 ✉

The "Reel Thing"—Male total package seeks female total package, 40-50. Right person will never want for anything. Photo/phone/note. 2317 ✉ ☎

Paradise In CT—Plus NYC culture. Super mensch, physician, youthful, nice-looking, active lifestyle, late 50s, seeks petite, slim Jewish woman. Note/photo a must (will reciprocate). 2321 ✉

Attractive Man—Early 40s, joint custody of young boy, lives on LI; businessman; fun-loving, active, sincere, expressive. Enjoys intimacy, outdoors, beaches. Seeks upbeat, attractive, slender non-smoking woman. Send note/photo. 2383 ✉

Calling NY's Finest—To the rescue (and I don't mean the police). Brilliant, beautiful, sexy woman with a heart of gold (so I'm told), dark hair and eyes, fit, 36, has downtown style and zest for life... requires assistance finding missing soul mate. He's caring, communicative, smart, funny, fit, outgoing, successful, loves kids and wants to have a family. Oh, he's also great-looking and sensual. Big reward for safe return. Send mug shots. 2359 ✉

Young, Gorgeous, Brilliant—Morally and mentally sound, seeking 45 plus, very well-established male surgeon with a good character, for long-term relationship. 2344 ✉ ☎

Shapely, Attractive Honey Blond—Professional woman - seeks a Bill Moyers soul mate, 58-67, with a sense of wonder, loving ideas, nature, people. 2322 ✉

Pretty, Perky, Petite Photographer—With plenty of pizzazz, seeks creative, trim, quite good-looking, really cute, fun-loving fellow, late 40s-early 60s. Photo a must. 2314 ✉

Funny, Ruggedly Handsome MD—Warm, passionate, 46, cardiologist. I love skiing, tennis, fine theater, movies, spirituality. I'm seeking voluptuous, buxom, brainy beauty with laughing eyes and glowing smile - for committed, incandescent relationship. No reply without full photo. 2349 ✉

Seeking New Body/Soul Mate—Are you 60 plus, willing to experience the heights and depths, interested to help our planet? Healthy, energetic, flexible, independent, adventurous? If so, this multifaceted, petite merry widow will welcome you with open arms. Note/photo/phone. 2327 ✉

Beautiful Bisexual Woman—32, fit, single, seeks chance with an intelligent, compassionate man. Note/photo. 2328 ✉

Witty, Cute—Financially secure, Jewish, 50, exceptional ex-businesswoman - ready to meet an emotionally together, able-bodied, honest, stable, regular, down-to-earth, secure, sound-minded man who can laugh. No smoking. 2326 ✉ ☎

Good-Looking, Literary Blond—Never kissed the president; waiting for you if you are 59 1/2 or look it, professional, own a passport, a good heart and some hair. I'm outgoing, nonreligious and non-abrasive. Recent photo, please. 2377 ✉

Handsome, Caring, Romantic—Male therapist, 58, now enjoying life as an artist, has two left feet but good hands for cuddling in movies. I want forever love affair with warm, caring and attractive woman. I love intimate conversations with food and romance. 2363 ✉

Gorgeous Brunette Physician—Seeking male professional, 38-50, who is looking for fun, romance and friendship. 2340 ✉

All I'm Missing—Is a picture of you on my desk. I'm 33, 5'3", pretty, sweet, thin and fit, with a great sense of humor. This single, Jewish professional female from NJ is looking to meet a handsome, intelligent, sincere, single Jewish professional male for a lifetime of love and devotion. Photo, please. 2311 ✉

Handsome, Sincere—6', Jewish gentleman, 35. Athletic, loves the outdoors seeks attractive lady, 26-35, for meaningful relationship. Please send full-length photo/note. 2370 ✉

Attractive, Intuitive, Aware—Fun-loving, successful businessman who lives country-style life in the mountains and sometimes city, seeks a grounded, affectionate, warm, loving, spiritual woman, 35-45, who wants to have her own family and deserves having an individuated, supportive relationship for mutual growth. Send latest photo. 2310 ✉

Handsome TV Executive/Attorney—36, seeks young, beautiful, sophisticated companion to share art, theater, exotic travel and romance. Photo, note and sense of humor a must. 2342 ✉

Fit, Attractive Widow—Warm, mellow, 65, loves life and people. Seeks attractive, kind, fit gentleman for companionship and good times. Photo, please. 2352 ✉

Father Of Three—Seeks company. White, divorced Jewish male, 46, professional, slim, honest and caring - likes skiing, boating, sports, movies, dining out or just hanging... In search of attractive, slim, single/divorced white female, 35-42. Kids okay. Current photo/phone. 2345 ✉ ☎

Mud Stuffin—41, athletic, Wall Street financier. Ex-sports model. Generous. Unselfish. Seeks lady equivalent. Satisfaction guaranteed. Photo/note. 2381 ✉

Smokin' (Literally)—Brunette, 26, smart, athletic, professional, fun-loving Jewish female seeks a driven, sincere and outgoing "Marlboro Man" under 32 (no Stetson, boots or cigs required). Photo appreciated - not of your horse. 2378 ✉ ☎

Blue-Eyed, Attractive—Slim, Jewish and intelligent white female, 5'3", would like to meet professional, single Jewish male, 35-43, who is tall, intelligent, stable and secure. Photo for response. 2324 ✉ ☎

NYMessage

Looking For The Woman—That I met at the 59th Street subway station. We were waiting at the upstairs level at 5pm on 12/17, when we found we were at the wrong level. We walked downstairs and, as we were getting on the train, the door shut on me. I had a mink coat on and you were going to Queens. 2341 ✉

NYMessage
A New Weekly Bannered Section in New York Magazine. Don't fret; place your ad in NYMessage - call 212-779-7500 or fax your ad to 779-2499

The Best Of Both Worlds—I am a vivacious Jewish lady, late 40s, who loves life and loves sharing it. My European savvy and my American creativity taught me how to be an inspiration for the man I love. I am a successful fashion designer with varied interests. Seeking an accomplished man with integrity and class to become best friends and more. 2368 ✉ ☎

Handsome, Caring, Secure—Seeks trim, bright lady, 50s; travel. Photo/note. 2353 ✉

Athlete With Brains—Divorced Christian male, 54, 5'8", 150 lbs - loves playing sports, exercise, books, chess, arts, movies, cooking, travel. Seeks petite, physically fit, sensuous woman seeking commitment. (914)/(212) preferred. Note/photo. 2360 ✉

One Singular Sensation—Jewish female, 42, 5'6", sensual Manhattanite and CEO. Seeks tender male partner for travel, skiing and whirlwind romance. Please be financially secure, emotionally grounded and already have great kids. 2312 ✉ ☎

Are There Any Normal Guys Left?—Pretty, slim, 5'5", green-eyed redhead... yes, Jewish. Seeks a "great guy" who's bright, ambitious, 30s-40s, has a sense of humor and is attractive inside and out. Must love dogs and like exercise, travel, movies, restaurants and lounging on the couch. Note/photo/phone. 2356 ✉ ☎

One Of A Kind—Successful executive, youthful 42, lean, athletic 6' (look good in black jeans or black tie), smart (JD), talented, no baggage (except traveling kind), warm personality and quick wit, looking to pair with slim, pretty, distinctive female, 28-38, who is romantic, down-to-earth and laughs (often). Note/photo. 2305 ✉ ☎

Suzanne Sommers Look-Alike—Stunning blond professional businesswoman who resides in New York and Houston, seeks tall, handsome doctor or lawyer, 50-60. 2365 ✉

Low Maintenance, High Returns—Pretty, slim, shy woman, 38, loves the outdoors and simple pleasures, looking for a sincere man to enjoy life. 2331 ✉

Dow 10,000—Jewish woman has taken stock in herself and is ready to invest. 36, 5'6", full-figured, very attractive, Ivy-educated business owner, homeowner in NYC and East Hampton, blue-chip personality. In the market for kind, smart, very successful Jewish man, mid 30s-mid 40s, who wants to add a wonderful woman to his portfolio. 2351 ✉ ☎

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Aventura, Florida—White Jewish professional male, young mid 60s, handsome 5'11", fit, financially secure, into the economy, jogging, dining, travel and quiet evenings at home. Seeks younger, very pretty, 35 plus, fit, elegant woman for a lasting family relationship. Note/photo. 2371 ✉

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Above, subject headings of email you're unlikely to read. One sample, please. Do your worst.

Results of Competition 903, in which you were asked for farewell performances.

Report: Wow. In quantity: RIP van Winkle. Auld Lang Synefeld. Auf wiederseinfeld. Seinfled. Glenn Closed. Brigadone. Vincent van Gone. Jane Curtins. Finito Mussolini. Much Adieu About Nothing. Simone De Beaurevoir. Albert Finis. Gerard Depardieu. Tata Lipinski. Arriverderci MOMA. Bill "Pearly" Gates. Goodbye, Columbo. James Goner. Dominick Done. Chicagone. We were not necessarily eager to know the manner of death. (Merrill Lynched, e.g.) But hey. Brilliant. You are not dead; you are just asleep. Many thanks.

First Prizes of two-year subscriptions to *New York* to:

TRIGGER MORTIS
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Stephen Rosenberg, Narberth, Pa.

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Tania Owen, Nashville, Tenn.
also: Carol Kolbrenner, N.Y.C.

THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A GAT
Louise Jackson, Somerset, Mass.

And Honorable Mention to:

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Ellen Conford, Great Neck, N.Y.

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Carleton Carpenter, Warwick, N.Y.

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING DEAD
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THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE DEAD DOG
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Rules: Postcards, please, typed if possible. **ONE ENTRY ONLY** to Competition Number 906, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022-6999. E-mail to 104700.2563@compuserve.com, **WITH STREET ADDRESS.** Entries must be received by March 27. Editor's decisions are final, and all entries become property of *New York.* Results and winners' names will appear in the April 21 issue.

Denby

continued from page 85

offers a show-business view of politics, which is no surprise. Forty years ago, Mike Nichols and Elaine May set up shop as observers and satirists. Brilliant before a live audience, they transformed little behavioral quirks and anxieties into first-rate cabaret theater. When Nichols turned to directing movies, he stayed on the surface, observing and re-creating behavior, devoting himself, often with great skill, to attitude, manners, style. The best scenes in his first film, *The Graduate,* played like sophisticated nightclub skits, and in the recent *The Birdcage,* the comedy was noisy and broad, like something in a superb sitcom.

So Nichols and May turn this group of ambitious pols into a jolly gang of hipsters, and though I enjoyed all the smart talk and profane irreverence, I didn't take the picture all that seriously. That is, I took it not as reality but as an entertaining convention, a movieish fantasy of what political life is like—quarrelsome, colorful as hell, unburdened by drudgery and nagging detail. It is certainly a performer's view of running a campaign; it offers personality as performance.

Since the movie is often funny and loose-limbed—a series of riffs—it seems odd, a bit like dirty pool, when it suddenly turns very serious indeed, and even tragic. The question is posed: Will the Stantons use some vicious material against an opponent in the race, a southern governor with a nasty secret (the governor is played by Larry Hagman with tender dignity)? In its overwrought emotionalism, the violent reaction of Stanton's staff to this decision seems to me extreme and dramatically naïve. It goes beyond saying, "Jack Stanton is smart, he cares, he wants to deliver, and it's sickening how amoral and undisciplined he is." No, the movie suddenly seems to hold Stanton responsible for honor itself. If *he* fails in honor, the light goes out of life.

The trouble is, the filmmakers haven't created a rich enough portrait of the president-to-be; they haven't shown enough of his talent to warrant this anguish over its betrayal. We see his empathy, his political adroitness, but we don't see any of the famous intellect, the command of detail and policy that everyone says is so impressive. Nichols may have miscalculated. You can't entertain an audience with the slobbiness of the future leader—a man who's the life of the barbecue—and then complain bitterly that he isn't a figure of probity. *Primary Colors* leaves an uneasy feeling in its wake—not only about the president but about the ability of the movies to handle the moral issues he has so persistently aroused. ■

David Denby's 1998 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com,** *along with movie news, a schedule of upcoming openings, and more.*

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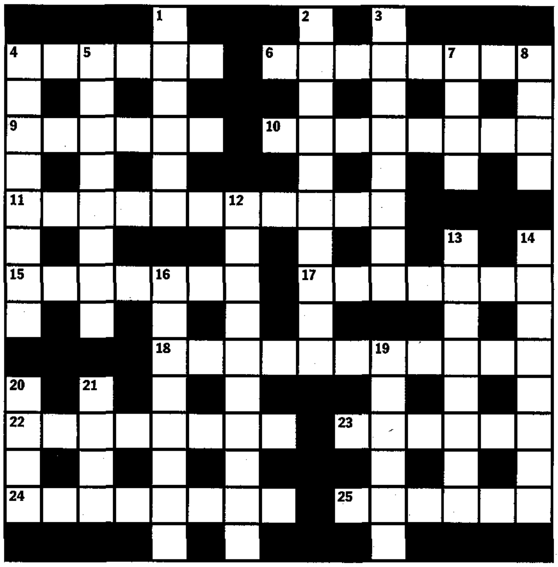
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

- **4** Preserve a road report that's false. (6)
- **6** Greek poem about Irish assembly that is extremely honest. (3,5)
- **9** Little Tommy's grub? (6)
- **10** Stem dynasty preparing for war again? (8)
- **11** Instinctive response of good German with reference to battle. (3,8)
- **15** An Asian city managed to make progress. (7)
- **17** English trees? Humbug! (7)
- **18** Mountaineer's scrambling list. (11)
- **22** Lone Royalist in disguise. (8)
- **23** Champ with his heart in a German city. (6)
- **24** Outrageous jingoism? (8)
- **25** Father taking others out for a meal. (6)



DOWN

- **1** Cheeses, we hear, in cooler. (6)
- **2** It looks ill. (3,4,3)
- **3** Creating new fruit. (8)
- **4** Class act in play, say, or end of play. (8)
- **5** It can be addictive in a French city, love can. (8)
- **7** One attempt in the same place. (4)
- **8** Accommodation for squad's last soldier sent back to second front. (4)
- **12** Agree payment for acting, together. (10)
- **13** Church based initially on a rock-forming mineral. (8)
- **14** Consumer magazine about end of migration thanks returning bird. (8)
- **16** A piece of music that's finished—true composition. (8)
- **19** Sharpness shown by a copper getting in the last word in prayer. (6)
- **20** From sofa to settle? (2,2)
- **21** Changeable island. (4)

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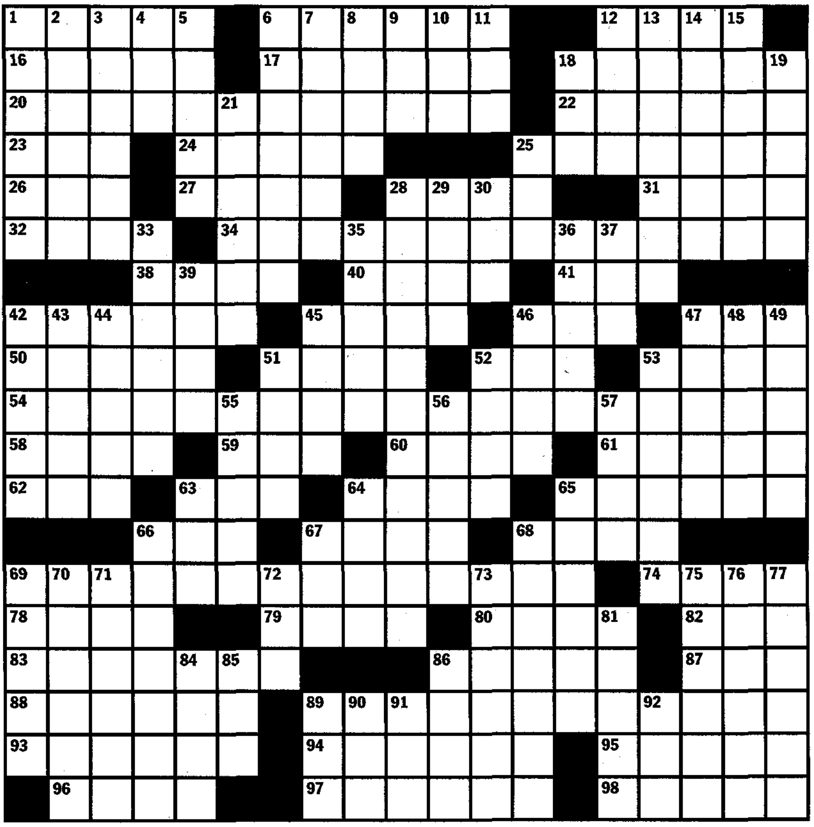
'Riddle': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

- **1** Aga's colleague
- **6** Team pet
- **12** Sound like Satchmo
- **16** Frome of fiction
- **17** Off the ocean
- **18** Iterated
- **20** Start of a riddle
- **22** Stag's weapon
- **23** Huck's pal
- **24** Sylvester's "Rocky" co-star
- **25** Habitat scene in a museum
- **26** Relative of the rhea
- **27** "We try harder" company
- **28** Postmark information
- **31** One-named model
- **32** Remainder
- **34** Riddle continued
- **38** Plane sight
- **40** Pre-owned
- **41** Pedicure target
- **42** Versed in language
- **45** Former Broadway org.
- **46** Between Ho and Minh
- **47** Bam!
- **50** Not as green
- **51** Composer Stravinsky
- **52** Dauphin's père
- **53** "Arabian Nights" name
- **54** End of the riddle
- **58** Gets grayer
- **59** Ryan of "Sleepless in Seattle"
- **60** Relinquish by treaty
- **61** Discontinue
- **62** Decay
- **63** Synonym and anagram for "aye"
- **64** Europe's most active volcano
- **65** Casino employee
- **66** Society rookie
- **67** Lake of Perry's victory
- **68** Amontillado holder
- **69** Start of the answer
- **74** Make an even exchange
- **78** Threadbare
- **79** Soy, for one
- **80** Whale of a movie
- **82** "What Kind of Fool ——?"
- **83** Gofers' assignments
- **86** Pawnees' friends
- **87** —— Saud
- **88** Blackboard appurtenance
- **89** End of the answer
- **93** Marks indicating repetition
- **94** Kickback
- **95** The "I" in ICBM
- **96** Calendar units
- **97** Ibsen's Hedda
- **98** Rodeo rope

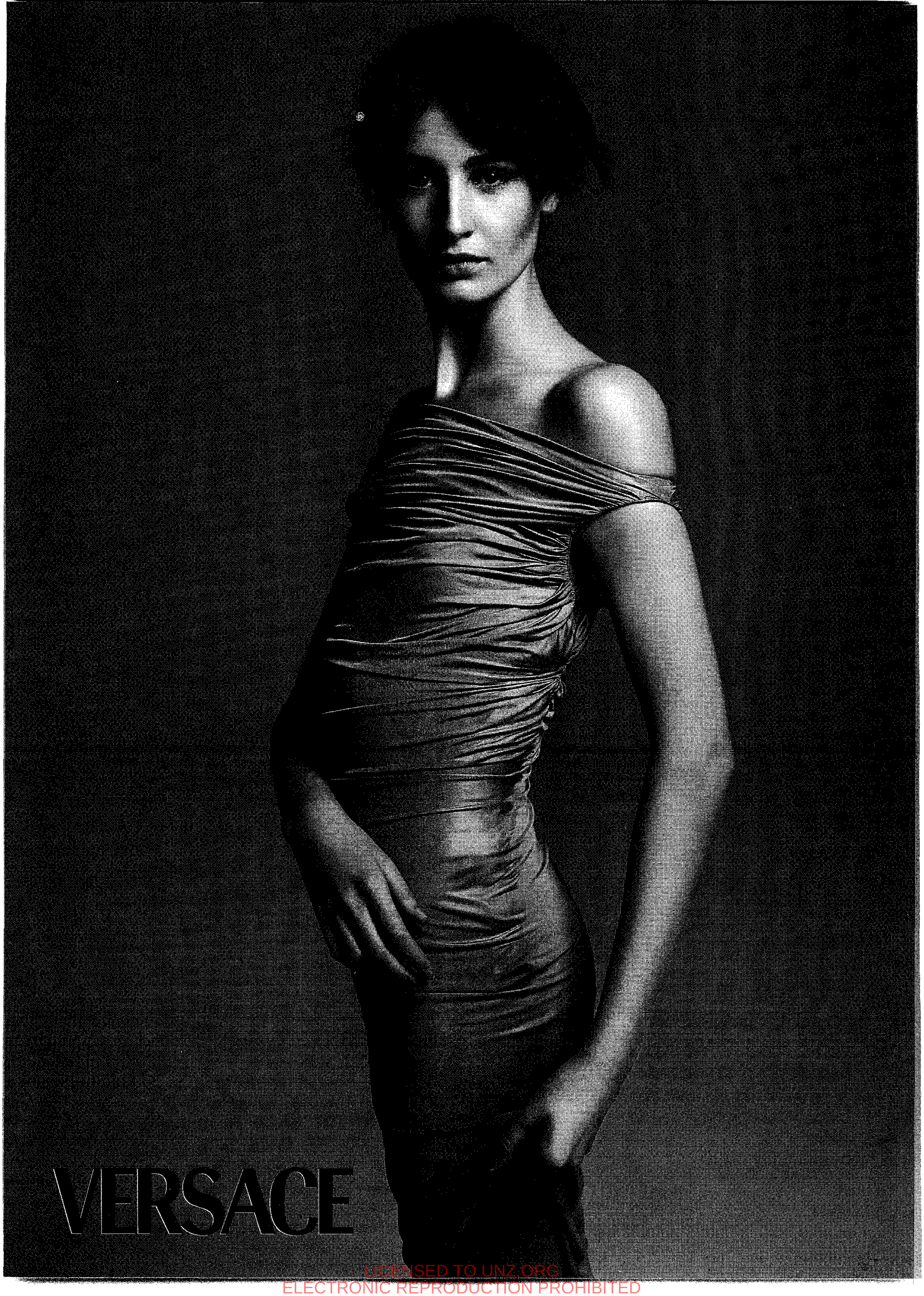
DOWN

- **1** Tin alloy resembling silver
- **2** In
- **3** Detective, slangily
- **4** Milliner's output
- **5** Santa ——, California racetrack
- **6** Manhandling
- **7** Italian saint's town
- **8** Mets' turf
- **9** Provincetown catch
- **10** "I haven't seen a crocus —— rosebud . . ."
- **11** Vietnam offensive
- **12** Nevada city farther west than San Diego
- **13** In the saddle
- **14** Deli meat
- **15** Simple Simon's acquaintance
- **18** Heyerdahl's first papyrus boat
- **19** Sturm's go-with
- **21** Learned person
- **25** Morning moisture
- **28** Attention-diverting cause
- **29** Opposite of 17-Across
- **30** Chaplain's degree: abbr.
- **33** Words from birds
- **35** ——-the-mill
- **36** Standard of morality
- **37** "How —— love thee?"
- **39** As to the matter of
- **42** Mendicant monk
- **43** Jargon
- **44** Unexpected sports result
- **45** Wide-eyed
- **46** Spy's message form
- **47** Pertaining to the Vatican
- **48** Far from slim
- **49** Firefighting need
- **51** Bright thought
- **52** The scarlet letter
- **53** Fractures
- **55** One-celled animal
- **56** Extend a subscription
- **57** Tennis feats
- **63** Pine tree's kin
- **64** Brünnhilde's mother
- **65** Tripped the light fantastic
- **66** John Forsythe drama series
- **67** Scrape by meagerly, with "out"
- **68** Christmas vocalist
- **69** Rough wool fabric
- **70** Dreadful
- **71** Typos
- **72** What ozs. add up to
- **73** Write commentary
- **75** Belt sites
- **76** Strolls
- **77** "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" playwright
- **81** Cry of the Ancient Mariner
- **84** Modernists, for short
- **85** E.R. personnel
- **86** Unwritten exam
- **89** Measure of work, in physics
- **90** —— culpa
- **91** Lyricist with Kander
- **92** Actress Balin



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 147.

CHIVAS REGAL. a fall from grace is a small price to pay for it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